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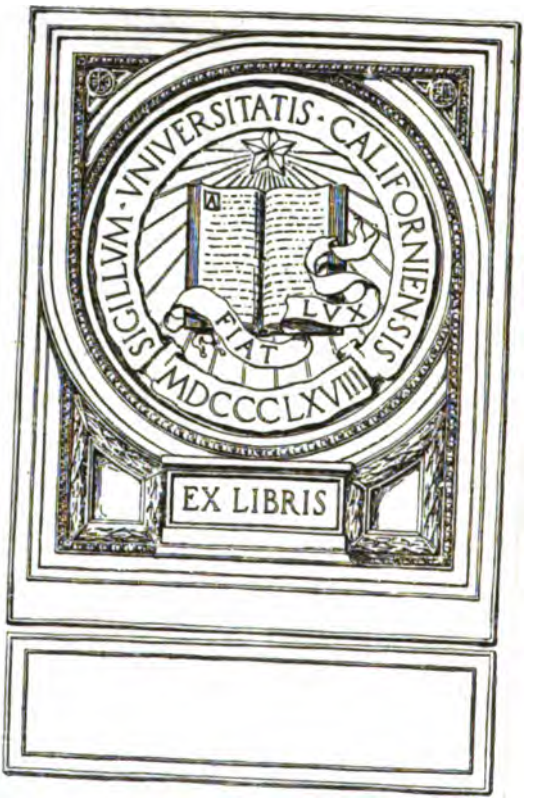
MUSICAL MEMORIES

GEORGE P. UPTON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Faithfully Yours
Geo. P. Upton

MUSICAL MEMORIES

MY RECOLLECTIONS OF CELEBRITIES OF THE HALF CENTURY 1850—1900

BY

GEORGE P. UPTON

AUTHOR OF "THE STANDARD OPERAS," ETC., ETC.

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS

CHICAGO
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1908

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I dedicate these Memories
to the Ghosts

255141

PREFACE

IT is with the purpose of preserving my records of music during the last half century in compact and accessible shape, and also to satisfy many friends who have suggested that I should undertake a work of this nature, that I have compiled these "Memories," covering the half century 1850-1900. During nearly all that time I was engaged in the labor of musical criticism in Chicago, and therefore had unusual opportunities to observe what was transpiring in the musical world. I did not personally know Jenny Lind, Henriette Sontag, Marietta Alboni, Anna Thillon, and Catherine Hayes, the artists mentioned in the first two chapters, but I had the rare pleasure of hearing them in concerts. I have had personal acquaintance of a more or less intimate kind, however, with all the others.

I have recalled the events herein set down from conversations, managerial statements taken with the proper discount, reviews, records, and programmes I have kept, as well as from a diary in which I jotted down much of interest for reference in my journalistic duty. In looking back over so long a period, memory may sometimes exaggerate and even play false, but I have striven to keep within the bounds of accuracy

and to avoid mere gossip or statements that might wound the sensitive. I have also made use of history and biography only so far as they are necessary to keep the context clear. As the public is sufficiently familiar in these days of personal journalism with artists still upon the stage, I have confined these "Memories" only to those who have retired into the shady nooks of life and to that other goodly company for whom are the last words of Canio in "Pagliacci," "La commedia è finita."

It follows as a matter of course that these recollections are mainly local, for I wrote the first musical criticism printed in a Chicago newspaper, and that means a far cry back into the past. In the hope that the beginnings of music in Chicago may possess some interest I have gone back to the first note Chicago heard, at a time when Indians and coyotes outnumbered whites there almost ten to one. But as the fifty years of Chicago's musical history means fifty years of memories of all the great artists who have been in the United States, the mere location is not of any special significance.

With these prefatorial remarks I venture to submit these memories of "days that are no more" with the hope that they will prove of value to musicians and will not be wholly unacceptable to the general public.

G. P. U.

CHICAGO, July 1, 1908.

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MUSICAL MEMORIES

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

MUSICAL MEMORIES

CHAPTER I

JENNY LIND

ARRIVAL OF JENNY LIND IN NEW YORK — HER FIRST CONCERT — BARNUM'S METHODS OF MANAGEMENT — THE JENNY LIND FEVER — HER ENTHUSIASTIC RECEPTION — POPULAR OVATIONS AND EXTRAVAGANCES — THE CONCERT IN PROVIDENCE — STUDENT DELIRIUM — ROSS'S $650 TICKET — JENNY LIND'S PERSONAL APPEARANCE ON THE STAGE — HER VOICE AND METHOD OF SINGING — THE NOBILITY OF HER CHARACTER — TESTIMONY OF HER GREAT CONTEMPORARIES

MY musical memories reach back to Jenny Lind; my dramatic memories to Elise Rachel — a span of more than fifty years. Recalling those far-away days of youth, I count it exceptionally fortunate that I have heard and seen those two artists, as they have given me standards of appreciation and criticism. Making due allowance for the fact that Jenny Lind was the first really great singer who came to this country, also for youthful enthusiasms, for the delirious effects of that extraordinary popular frenzy which everywhere characterized her reception, and for the enchantment which distance lends to the view, her singing still remains my ideal of the highest exposition of the art of song.

Jenny Lind arrived in this country September 1, 1850, convoyed by Phineas T. Barnum. I have often wondered, considering her rare simplicity and unostentation, if she did not suffer at times from the peculiarly bombastic methods of management practised by that showman. Her first concert was given at Castle Garden, New York, September 11. Her supporting artists were Sir Julius Benedict, Richard Hoffman the pianist, who was engaged in New York for the American tour,* and Signor Beletti, barytone. Her numbers in the opening night's programme were the "Casta Diva" from "Norma"; the "Herdsman's Song," popularly known as the "Echo Song"; and the "Welcome to America," the text of which was written by Bayard Taylor and the music hastily set by Benedict. She also sang with Beletti in the duet "Per piacer alla Signora" from Rossini's "Il Turco in Italia," and in a trio from Meyerbeer's "Camp in Silesia," for voice and two flutes.

I was a Freshman in Brown University when I caught the Jenny Lind fever. I heard her for the first time in Boston, but my recollections of that occasion are somewhat hazy, for the scenes attending the concert were quite as riotous as musical, owing to an oversale of tickets and the resultant rage of the crowd who could not get into the hall. But my recollections

* The American tour included the following cities, in the order named: New York, Boston, Providence, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Richmond, Charleston, Havana, Matanzas, New Orleans, Natchez, Memphis, St. Louis, Nashville, Louisville, Cincinnati, Wheeling, Pittsburg, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New York. Jenny Lind made a second tour after cancelling her contract with Barnum, giving sixty-one concerts between June and December of 1851.

of the subsequent concert in Providence are as vivid as if it had taken place yesterday. The student body, and apparently the entire population of the city, were infected with the Jenny Lind fever. Thousands met her at the station, crowded about her hotel, and lingered around the hall at night, hoping to hear a note now and then, or at least catch a glimpse of her after the concert. No other singer in the history of the stage has received such ovations. They can only be compared with the reception of Kossuth when he visited the United States as the champion of Hungarian liberty, and of General Grant when he returned triumphant at the close of the Civil War. This Jenny Lind fever is worth dwelling upon, for it was unique.

The fever began in Europe during her operatic career. Even Berlioz wrote to a friend at that time: "I shall not go to London this season. The Lind fever makes all musical enterprises impossible." Barnum's keen eye recognized an opportunity for rich profits after she retired from the operatic stage. He sent his agents abroad and made a contract, engaging to give her a thousand dollars for each concert and her expenses, also the expenses of a lady companion, the services of a maid and servant, and a carriage and pair. Probably misled by the belief that Jenny Lind's art was above the comprehension of that day, he treated his new venture after the manner of a musical circus. He set afloat stories almost as remarkable as those which illustrated the astonishing careers of Joyce Heth, the Mermaid, and the Behemoth of Holy Writ, exaggerated her goodness and generosity, and flooded

the newspapers with portraits, sketches, and letters. It was an incongruous partnership, but genius maintained its dignity and truth as against the cunning tricks of the showman.

As the steamer approached New York, the bay was alive with boats which had gone down to meet it. She was welcomed at the landing with the enthusiastic shouts of thousands and passed to her carriage under arches erected in her honor. Spirited white horses conveyed her to her hotel, followed by an enormous crowd. She was serenaded at midnight by singing societies and the city firemen, for in those days firemen were the spectacular feature of every public event. This was in the days when Chanfrau's "Mose" used to delight us boys. On the following day she was visited by the leading officials and citizens. Public reception days were also appointed, and at such times the hotel was thronged with people of all classes. She literally absorbed everything. Maretzek, the impresario, once told me they were trying days for him. He was booming Parodi, a really excellent prima donna, whose superb personation of "Norma" still lingers in my memory; but resourceful and plucky as he was, he could not stand the pressure. Before the week was out the store windows were filled with Jenny Lind bonnets, gloves, coats, hats, parasols, combs, jewelry, bric-a-brac, and fineries, and tradesmen sent their wares to her rooms, eager for an advertisement. Quacks used her name. She was besieged by autograph hunters and genteel beggars. The music stores published hundreds of songs, waltzes, and polkas named after her. Her

portrait was in every shop window. The choice dishes of the hotel menus were "*à la* Jenny Lind." The Jenny Lind pancake, that choice German confection, survives even to-day. Young women dressed their hair in her style and tried to imitate her naturally graceful gait. Jenny Lind tea-kettles were advertised by one dealer, "which, being filled with water and placed on the fire, commenced to sing in a few minutes." Provision dealers sold Jenny Lind sausages, and even *cafés* and bar-rooms took her name. During that week's fever, however, one person is recorded as immune. He was a Bowery boy, and he is said to have replied to a friend who told him Jenny Lind was the greatest singer in the world: "I don't know about that." "Who is her equal?" said his friend. "Who? why, Mary Taylor. Our Mary would sing the clothes off her back." The fever lasted during the entire American tour. There was a trotting match in St. Louis, March 19, 1851, on the Prairie Horse Course, and the entries were Jenny Lind, Barnum, Benedict, and Beletti, Benedict winning the race. Jenny Lind never came to Chicago, as many suppose.* Chicago was not much of a city, musically or otherwise, in her time, but the following advertisement, which appeared in one of its papers, October 25, 1850, shows that the city had the symptoms of the fever.

* St. Louis was the nearest to Chicago that Jenny Lind came on her first tour. She sent, however, during the first week of her season in New York, $1000 to the Swedish church of St. Ansgarius, then in process of erection in Chicago. During her second tour in 1851, she sang in Buffalo, Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati, and was to have sung also, I believe, in Detroit and Chicago. For some reason, however, she gave up her final concerts and returned East.

"JUST ARRIVED

"At 168 Lake Street, a beautiful lot of Jenny Lind long and square shawls, extra fine quality and neat and elegant styles, such as adorn the graceful form of that universal charmer, the Swedish Nightingale, whose inimitable warblings and acts of noble benevolence are now the admiration of the world. Also Jenny Lind dress goods, etc., at our one-price cash store.

FRANCIS CLARK."

Of course we had the fever in Providence. Every one had it — men, women, and children, — and the students had it worse than the rest. They even forgot to go down to the Arcade just to see Gertude Dawes, the graceful *danseuse*, walk and teach the ladies of Providence how to wear a shawl. They even neglected those infant phenomena, the Bateman children, and declined to see George Vandenhoff and Mrs. Forrest in the "Lady of Lyons." Alma Mater threw up her ancient hands in despair and let her children have their way. The fever was intensified by local pride, for had not Ross, the expressman, friend of all students, paid the highest price for choice of seats, higher even than Genin in New York and Dodge in Boston, although of course he did not attend the concert.* He never did anything like other people. His eccentricities would fill a volume. My room-mate, a wild Hoosier, who knew no more about music than a hen, had a most violent attack of the fever. He invested all his scanty pocket money in

* The various premiums paid for first choice during the tour were as follows: New York, $225; Boston, $625; Providence, $650; Philadelphia, $625; Baltimore, $100; New Orleans, $240; St. Louis, $150; Nashville, $200; Louisville, $100; and Cincinnati, $575.

hairs supplied by one of the hotel chambermaids, who declared she took them from Jenny Lind's brush. He paid a tidy sum for these souvenirs of the divinity and brought them back exultantly. He reluctantly allowed me to have one or two, and I kept them as precious relics, until it was ascertained later that this thrifty commercial maid had been doing a lucrative business disposing of her own and others' hairs. I have known of other such transactions in artistic hair, which will appear later in these recollections.

At last the eventful night came — October 7, 1850, — a red-letter date in memory. The usually staid city was in a state of delirium, which astonished those conservative old families — the Iveses, Browns, Goddards, and Hoppins. I can see it all now — the crowds, the enthusiasm, the great audience inside, and the vastly greater crowd outside wishing it were inside. I see Jenny Lind gliding down the stage with consummate grace, — she never seemed to walk, — amid the acclamations of the audience; a girlish figure of medium height, with fair hair and blue eyes, gowned in velvet, and wearing a single rose in her hair. She was plain of feature, and yet her face was expressive and in a sense fascinating. It was a wholesome face. She may not have been beautiful, judged by the conventional beauty tests; but if not extremely good-looking, she "looked good," as some one has said. And that goodness drew every one to her, and she was "Jenny" with every one, — not Signora Lind, or Mademoiselle Lind, or Miss Lind, but Jenny Lind, as we say Annie Cary or Lilli Lehmann. Her voice, as I remember it, was of full volume

and extraordinary range, and had a peculiar penetrating quality also, because of its purity, which made its faintest tone clearly audible and enabled her to use exquisitely soft pianissimos. Her high notes were as clear as a lark's, and her full voice was rich and sonorous. Her singing was genial and sympathetic and marked by the fervor and devotional quality which characterized her nature. It evinced a noble musical endowment and great reverence for her art. She was little affected by adulation, but acknowledged the wild, frantic applause courteously and with evident pleasure. Benedict, her leader, said "she made a conscience of her music." The strong intellectual quality of her nature, as well as her aversion to gewgaws and shams, her deep religious feeling, her simplicity of manner, and her goodness of heart, as shown by her numerous acts of benevolence, confirm the truth of his statement. It seems to me that in a rare manner she combined art, love, and genius, and that she was actuated by the lofty purpose of using them for the good of others. How grandly she succeeded!

"Ik Marvel" and George William Curtis were the literary idols of youth in the fifties. The former said of her in his charming "Lorgnette": "She is a large-souled woman, with not an affectation of the stage or one mimicry of feeling — only Jenny, as the God who made the people of the pine lands as well as the people of the olives fashioned her; and if the amateurs can mend her, they may." And George William Curtis eloquently said of her, years after the fever had burned itself out: "The youth of her day have borne her in

Univ. of California

JENNY LIND

their hearts across a generation, and their hearts still rise at the mention of her name, as the Garde du Roi sprang up cheering to their feet when the Queen appeared." I was one of those youths, and I have borne her in my heart and memory across two generations and she remains for me still the one peerless singer I have heard on the concert stage.

What did some of the great ones think of Jenny Lind in her own day? Chopin said: "She does not show herself in the ordinary light, but in the magic rays of the aurora borealis. Her singing is infallibly pure and true and has an indescribable charm." Lablache said to Queen Victoria: "I can say I have never heard anything like her singing," and to Grisi, "Every note was a pearl," a remark which Grisi may not have relished. Clara Schumann said: "What a great, heaven-inspired being she is! What a pure, true artist soul! Her songs will ever sound in my heart." And Mendelssohn said: "She is as great an artist as ever lived and the greatest I have known."

Surely these should know.

CHAPTER II

SONTAG, ALBONI, THILLON, HAYES

A FLIGHT OF SONGBIRDS — HENRIETTE SONTAG — HER NUMEROUS ADMIRERS — THE ROMANCE OF HER CAREER — MARRIAGE TO COUNT ROSSI — HER PERSONAL APPEARANCE — HER VOICE AND STYLE OF SINGING — TROUBLES IN HER LAST DAYS — SUDDEN DEATH IN MEXICO — CRUEL REPORTS OF A SCANDAL — SONTAG'S RIVAL, ALBONI, THE GREAT CONTRALTO — HER FINISHED SINGING — ANNA THILLON — GREAT SUCCESS IN "CROWN DIAMONDS" — HER BEAUTY AND MAGNETISM — "KATE" HAYES — THE VICTIM OF SPECULATORS — HER SUCCESS IN BALLADS

REPORTS from the United States must have induced the belief among European songbirds that Jenny Lind had discovered an inexhaustible musical and golden bonanza, for they began flocking over here before her second tour was concluded. Among them were four whom it was my good fortune to hear, — Henriette Sontag (Countess Rossi), Marietta Alboni (Countess Pepoli), and untitled Anna Thillon and Catherine Hayes. They did not all have Jenny Lind's good fortune, however, and two of them were bitterly disappointed, as will appear. They only gleaned after her abundant reaping.

Of these four, Sontag attracted most attention and admiration, though Alboni was a better musician and a more finished singer. Sontag's success was due in part

to her beauty and engaging manners. About the time she came to this country (1852) Von Bülow aptly called her "a forty-eight year old soubrette." She had a reputation indeed as a fascinator long before her American tour. Goethe in his seventy-eighth year, after meeting her in Paris, said: "She must needs remain a sweet, agreeable enjoyment," and Goethe was a judge of the *ewig weibliche*. He expressed no opinion of her singing, possibly because music generally confused him. Apparently he knew little of the technic of the art beyond what Bettina von Arnim told him. Rossini, Cherubini, Boieldieu, Auber, De Beriot, and Walter Scott were among her devoted admirers. She was literally pursued by some, among them Lord Clanwilliam, British Ambassador at Berlin, who was so persistent in his unwelcome attentions that he was called "Lord Montag following Sontag." Her success was also due in part to the romantic events in her career. Berlioz, Weber, Liszt, and Beethoven were among her friends and advisers. Liszt, who was always gallant, called her "the Thalberg of Song," and Berlioz rather neatly discriminated when he said, "She was first in her class, but the class was not the first." At the very zenith of her career, while enjoying the plaudits of the multitude, the friendship of great musicians, and the adulation of titled and untitled admirers, Sontag attracted the attention of Count Rossi, an Italian diplomat, who wooed her with such ardor that they were speedily married. They went immediately to The Hague, where he was representing Sardinia. The King of Prussia granted her the patent of nobility, whereupon she retired from

the stage. After a quiet life of eighteen years together, reverses overtook them. She lost her fortune and decided to return to the stage, and Count Rossi resigned his position so that he might be at liberty to accompany her. As it eventuated, he might better have remained at home and permitted her to be wage-earner under some competent manager.

They came to this country in 1852, bringing with them Pozzolini, tenor, and Badiali, barytone. The stories of her great success abroad, of her remarkable beauty, and of the romance of her career, had preceded her and aroused much interest. Her reception was cordial, but there was no "fever," as in the case of Jenny Lind. As I remember Sontag, she was a blonde, somewhat slight of figure, with large, bright blue eyes and hair inclining towards auburn in color. I am quite sure I am right about this, as I have a little lock of her hair which came from Germany in a letter written by Sontag to a friend — I think I am justified in the belief that it did not come from any chambermaid's hairbrush. As she was very pretty and her toilettes were elegant, she of course became the fashionable rage and was guest of honor at innumerable society functions. Her carriage was exceedingly graceful and her manner on the stage sprightly, coquettish, and fascinating. Von Bülow was right when he called her "a forty-eight year old soubrette." She was about that age when I saw her, and her elegance of manner and personal charms are still vivid in my recollection. In these respects she was the Sembrich of her day. Her voice was an exquisitely pure high soprano, with a mezzo piano in it

which Nilsson afterwards used so effectively. Her execution was graceful and refined, and her style must have lent itself best to roles requiring coquetry and archness, like Martha, Rosina, or Amina.

Poor Sontag's fate was a sorrowful one. Prima donnas' husbands are notorious mischief-makers and intermeddlers, if not hoodoos, for their wives, and impresarios always dread them. The bonanza in her case proved to be rich in troubles. She had to contend in the first place against Alboni, greatest of contraltos, and, beautiful and fascinating as she was, she could not make headway against her. Count Rossi kept her in litigations, so irascible was he, as well as ignorant of stage matters. Yielding to his importunities and disregarding the advice of friends, they went to Mexico at a time when the cholera was epidemic there. After a performance of "Lucrezia Borgia," she suddenly caught the disease and died in a few hours.* Six others of her troupe, among them Pozzolini, her tenor, were also victims. I well remember the excitement which was caused when the first report came that Count Rossi, furious at a scandal which concerned his wife and Pozzolini, had poisoned them both. Perhaps the report, in some indirect manner, may have grown out of the Borgia poisoning scene in the opera. Reports of many apparently startling events have had as absurd a foundation. In time, however, it was well established that she had died of cholera. She now rests in peace in the convent cemetery of St. Marienthal, near Dresden, by the side of her loved sister, who was a nun there,

* June 17, 1854.

secluded from the world in which the Countess had had such a brilliant career.

Sontag's dangerous rival was Marietta Alboni, the greatest contralto of her time, and indeed of her century. She had also been a rival of Jenny Lind in London before the latter abandoned the operatic stage. She was the greatest of contraltos in a double sense, for besides being a most finished singer, with a glorious voice, she was blessed with a most generous degree of corpulency, which, however, did not detract from her singing or prejudice her admirers against her. I remember her even more distinctly than Sontag, for it is impossible to forget either her proportions or her voice. She could not be called handsome, like Sontag, nor could she glide gracefully over the stage, like Jenny Lind, and yet her face wore a genial and good-naturedly attractive expression, and she carried herself with a certain dignity and high-bred manner that soon made you forget her embonpoint. Her voice was full, rich, and sonorous, of extraordinary range, and, for so big a voice, of unusual flexibility. Moreover she was musical, — a quality not always found in great singers. That is, she sang with great feeling, with an intellectual comprehension, as evinced by her interpretation of sentiment and idea, with absolute accuracy, with pure, clear enunciation, and with instrumental facility and finish, much in the style Madame Schumann-Heink sings to-day. Sontag charmed every one; Alboni specially charmed musical people.

And next came Anna Thillon, an English girl, whose maiden name was Hunt, and who married Monsieur

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MARIETTA ALBONI

KATE HAYES
ANNA THILLON

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Thillon, her French music-teacher. I wonder if there are any of the old fellows left, who have presumed to live beyond the Osler limit, who heard Thillon when I did in the early fifties, and who were carried off their feet, as I was, when I heard her in "Crown Diamonds," which Auber wrote for her. I wonder if they remember how furiously they applauded when Catarina sang that bravura aria, "Love! at once I break thy fetters," or the cavatina, "Love dwelleth with me," and how they fancied she was looking at and singing to them only. I wonder if they still recall the lustre of her hair and its ravishing curls (there were no colossal pompadours then), the flash of her eyes, and the elegance of her figure. If there are any of them left, be sure they will rise again at the sound of her name and declare to a man there never was such a fascinator on the stage. She was by no means a great singer compared with those of whom I have been writing. Indeed, they say she could not begin to sing the role of Catarina as well as Louise Pyne, who really first made the success of "Crown Diamonds." And yet she was one who cannot be forgotten. Though English, she was a beauty of the Spanish type. She had a rich olive-hued skin, glorious black hair, and dark lustrous eyes, which languished sensuously and flashed wickedly. She was one to rave over because of her personal grace and fascinating eyes; and all golden youths, and some youths who were not golden, consequently raved. There may be some of these youths still left, with gray or whitening polls, who as they recall her will echo Villon's plaint, "Where are the snows of yester year?" and wonder if there are such divinities now.

The last of the four songbirds is poor Catherine or "Kate" Hayes. There was no bonanza for her. She was mistreated, mismanaged, and duped. She was an Irish girl, and when she left for this country her admirers thronged the quay and Thackeray bade her goodbye in some graceful words. She was the victim of speculators, who foolishly tried to boom her after the Barnum style, but without Barnum's judgment and knowledge of human nature. Because Barnum called Jenny Lind "the Swedish Nightingale," they advertised "Kate" Hayes as "the Swan of Erin." They set all manner of silly stories afloat about her and extravagantly advertised her virtues, goodness, and benevolence, as Barnum had done for Jenny Lind. But it was of no avail. As her concerts were not profitable, she remained but a short time in the East, and then went to San Francisco, where the people had not been surfeited with music, as it was too far off for singers and too expensive to get there. So she had a few months of success and then went back to Europe. "Kate" Hayes had an ethereal kind of beauty and a very pleasant voice, and while she had not achieved much success as an operatic singer, few in her day could sing songs and ballads more delightfully. It was a rare treat to hear her sing Tom Moore's lyrics. She deserved a better fate. It was a brilliant galaxy, these five artists of the fifties whom I have recalled, but I am not through with that period yet. I came to Chicago in the early fifties and met a little singer first entering her teens, whose name is writ large in the operatic history of this country.

CHAPTER III

ADELINA PATTI

PATTI'S FAMILY — HER CAREER — CONCERTIZING WITH OLE BULL — THE CONTRACT WITH MAPLESON — CONCERTS IN THE FIFTIES — HER FIRST CONCERT IN CHICAGO — HER LOVE OF DOLLS — CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHILD PRIMA DONNA — THE MAPLESON-ABBEY COMPETITION — THE PATTI MARRIAGES — HER SUCCESS AS A VOCALIST — THE FAREWELL HABIT — AT THE AUDITORIUM DEDICATION

ADELINA PATTI has recently retired from the stage and is now living in the enjoyment of an ample fortune, for, unlike many of the prima donnas of her time, she has provided for the rainy days. Her career has been exceptionally long; her stage life a continuous triumph. In a remote way she can be affiliated with Jenny Lind, for though but a mere child when she heard the great Swedish singer, she imitated her manner of singing so closely that her parents at once put her under musical instructors. It seems but yesterday that she was in her prime, and yet she was a public singer fifty-five years ago. So, with apologies for even suggesting a lady's age, I must assign her to the period of the fifties, — a young contemporary of Jenny Lind, Sontag, and Alboni.

I must say a little about her family, for its history throws some light upon her musical environment and heredity. There was not an impulse, an influence, or a purpose in her early life which was not musical. These

are the facts as told to me years ago by Maurice Strakosch, her brother-in-law. Her mother was Catarina Chiesa, a prima donna, who married Barili, her teacher. After his death she married Salvatore Patti, and as Catarina Barili-Patti she sang in this country with considerable success. The mother must have been a more dramatic singer than Adelina, for Norma was her best role.

Adelina's brothers and sisters were — Antonio, Nicolo, Ettore, Clotilde, Carlos, Amalia, and Carlotta. Antonio, the eldest, born in Rome, was both composer and director, and ended his days in New York as a teacher. Nicolo was a basso of considerable reputation. Ettore was a barytone, and became a teacher after his retirement from the stage. He sang with Adelina in Chicago as early as 1855, and again in 1859 in opera, when he appeared in "Rigoletto." Clotilde made her operatic debut at nineteen. She was a creature "of fire and dew," and so enraged aristocratic old Colonel Thorne of New York by marrying his son, that the young pair fled from his wrath to Peru. Little was heard of them afterwards, except that the husband died at sea and Clotilde followed him a few years later at Matanzas, Cuba. I will speak of Amalia, Carlotta, and Carlos in the next chapter, from personal acquaintance.

I must say a few words also about Adelina's career before I record any impressions of her. She was born in Madrid, of a Sicilian father and a Roman mother, and never had a real home until in her later years she reached that castle, so strongly fortified with consonants, — Craig y nos, Ystradgynlais, Breconshire, South

Wales. She is literally cosmopolitan and a child of the theatre. Maurice Strakosch used to insist that she was born in 1842, but she herself has always declared February 19, 1843, to be the date of her birth. Her mother, while playing the title role of Norma in Madrid, was taken ill as the curtain rose on the last act. The next morning Adelina's little feet awaited the road that was to lead her to fame and fortune. Her parents brought her to the United States in 1845, and a year or two later they were identified with opera in New York, under the management of Maretzek, who was just beginning to experience the many ups and downs of his checkered career. Adelina's first public appearance was at a charity concert in 1851. Though she was only in her eighth year, she had skill enough to sing the "Ah! non giunge" from "Sonnambula," and the courage also to sing the "Echo Song," which Jenny Lind was then making so popular. Two years later she went West and sang in Chicago. She was in the same city in 1855, concertizing with Paul Julien, the violinist. In 1856 she made a concert tour with Maurice Strakosch. During the tour she met Ole Bull in Baltimore, and Strakosch induced him to join the company, which also included Morini, barytone; Schreiber, cornetist; and Roth, pianist. She afterwards made a short tour with Gottschalk, the pianist. On November 24, 1859, she made her operatic debut in New York in the title role of Lucia. Ulmann, the impresario, at first objected to her taking a leading role, because she was so young and childish in figure, but at last he gave his consent, and he never regretted it, for he found that

this girl of sixteen had an exceptionally beautiful voice, a brilliancy of execution equal to that of the older artists, and that she was conversant with the leading roles in "Sonnambula," "The Barber of Seville," "Traviata," "Martha," and a dozen more operas. Her knowledge of languages was a great help to her at that time. As she was destined for the stage, even in her infant days, her parents gave special attention not only to her musical, but also to her linguistic, training. She could speak French, Italian, and English fluently, and later she acquired German and Spanish. In 1860 she made another western tour with her sister Amalia, Brignoli, the tenor, and the bassos, Ferri and Junca. In 1861 she went to London and made her English debut. The metropolis was wild over her. Then followed a series of triumphs in Brussels, Berlin (where she sang in the same company with Lucca), Amsterdam, The Hague, Paris, and Vienna. In 1869 she was under engagement to Mapleson, senior, and the Colonel once showed me a copy of the contract. As I remember it, it provided that she should not sing on days of travel or sickness; that she should sing two or three times a week, as she chose; that she might select the operas in which she appeared; and that her remuneration should be $2500 a night, besides the travelling expenses of herself, her husband, and four other persons. This was liberal pay when it is considered that about this time Nilsson was paid $1000 for each performance, with certain allowances, and that Jenny Lind's first contract with Barnum called for only $1000 and expenses. But Patti, it is reported, has been paid as high as $5000 a night since those

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days.* With her career since 1869 my readers are sufficiently acquainted.

As will be seen by these brief statements of family history and of her own career, Adelina Patti was born in music and has lived in a musical atmosphere all her life — and this means everything to a singer. She was on the stage continuously from her eighth year to that of her retirement. She was taken to the theatre whenever her mother sang, and the details of the stage were firmly impressed upon her young mind. Sometimes its proprieties were impressed upon her in other ways. Upon one occasion, when her mother was singing in "Norma," Adelina went to the rehearsal, as she was to be one of the children. Not content with her voiceless role, she persisted in singing her mother's part, whereupon she was soundly spanked before the company and the orchestra. I first heard her in the early fifties at the Tremont House, Chicago, where she sang in a dining-room concert. She was singing bravura arias with the utmost ease and facility at an age when most children are contented with "Twinkle, twinkle, little star." As I recall her, I see a somewhat delicate, pale-faced, dark-browed child, with thick glossy black hair hanging in two long braids down her back, dressed in rose-colored silk, pink stockings, and pantalettes. She is perfectly at ease and glances around confidently, with a mischievous smile lurking about her mouth, but reserving her special radiance for rows of young girls in the

* These are the prices said to be paid to several leading artists at the present time: Melba, $3000; Caruso, $3000; Nordica, $2000; Schumann-Heink, $1800; Fremstad, $1800; Sembrich, $1500; Eames, $1500; Gadski, $1200; Plançon, $1200.

front chairs, with some of whom she has made a hotel acquaintance. Upon this occasion she followed up the execution of a brilliant aria with a request most unconventionally made to her friend Nellie, who seemed to be the favorite in the little diva's dominion, to come to her room when the concert was over and get acquainted with the sweetest doll in the world. At that time she doted upon children, dolls, candy, and birds. She could be induced to sing any time by the promise of a box of candy or a bird in a cage. She was an imperious little creature also. She hated encores as bitterly as Theodore Thomas did. When they were called for, she would refuse to give them. The insistence of the audience at last would exasperate her, and she would shake her head vigorously. Thereupon the amused audience would redouble its efforts, only ceasing when she began to manifest anger by stamping her little foot. It was a gala season in Chicago when "Signora Adelina Patti" was advertised to appear with Ole Bull at Tremont Music Hall. Ole himself was comparatively young in those days, but he looked ancient by the side of the assisting prima donna in her short skirts. It was at this period, by the way, that he began his dangerous practice of farewelling. It rapidly grew into a habit, and at last he could not shake it off. He gave plain farewells, "grand" farewells, "last" farewells, "absolutely last" farewells, and "positively last" farewells all the rest of his life, and blithely reappeared in Chicago almost every year during the next quarter of a century. Perhaps it was not his fault. He may have had a retiring disposition. It was unfortunate, however, because Adelina

caught the infection and gave us many farewells, pathetic and lovely, closing each with "Home, Sweet Home"; but she was always forgiven, for who could sing "Sweet Home" like her? In these concerts Ole Bull made us acquainted with "The Mother's Prayer," Paganini's "Witch Dance," and "The Carnival of Venice," and threw audiences into spasms of patriotic enthusiasm with variations on national airs. And what was the child who should have been singing children's songs at her age doing? She was executing "O, Luce di quest' anima" from "Linda," "Ah! non giunge" from "Sonnambula," "Ah! fors e lui" from "Traviata," and the bravura arias, with "Coming through the Rye" and Jenny Lind's "Echo Song" thrown in for good weight. And how the youngster sang them! And how those men and women, most of whom are now under the daisies, applauded! It was a young city then, had n't heard much fine music, and took to the young singer. There was not much temperament, not much feeling or thrill to her singing, but who could resist the spell of her ease and facility of execution, the clearness and purity of her tones, and her absolute musical self-possession, — in a word, the perfect mechanism which nature had put in her throat, even if there was not much soul behind it? I believe the child knew she was to be one of the greatest vocalists of all time and needed no one's assurance to that effect. Three or four years after this period, on the eve of her operatic debut in New York, some one asked her if she did not dread it. She looked up in the most unconcerned manner and replied that she did not dread it at all. She had always known she must make a

debut, and she might as well make it then as any time. She anticipated it with joy, for she knew she would succeed — and she did.

Adelina Patti's most remarkable appearances in Chicago were in the eighties. In 1884 she headed Colonel Mapleson's troupe, which also comprised Gerster, Pappenheim, Vicino, Galassi, Perugini, and her husband, Nicolini.* Chicago has not had such a feast of operatic music since. It was the year of the famous competition between Abbey and Mapleson. The pompous but optimistic old Colonel had out-manœuvred Abbey by getting Patti, who really wished to go with the latter; but on the other hand, Abbey had Nilsson, Sembrich (her first appearance in Chicago), Fursch-Madi, Valleria, Scalchi, Campanini, Trebelli, Capoul, and Del Puente. These two companies were housed under the same roof, and for a wonder were a happy family, for Mapleson and Abbey monopolized all the

* Adelina Patti has been married three times. In 1863 she was betrothed to Henri de Lossy, Baron de Ville, a minor like herself, but it is said that the match was broken up by her father and Maurice Strakosch, her brother-in-law. She was married in 1868 to the Marquis de Caux, "officer of ordnance to the Emperor, and aide-de-camp of the Empress as director of court cotillons." The banns were very stately: "M. Louis Sebastian Henri de Roger de Cahusac, Marquis de Caux, fils du Comte et de Demoiselle Huguet de Varange, actuellement femme du Duc de Velney, et Mlle. Adèle Jeanne Marie Patti, propriétaire, fille de M. Salvatore Patti et de Catherine Bhirza, rentiers." They were divorced in 1877, Patti averring that the Marquis was violently and ridiculously jealous, that he abused her and struck her, and insulted her by often telling her that he cursed the day when he married a strolling actress, and the Marquis averring that in his marriage he was actuated by tender affection, and that she gradually grew cold and irritable, disregarded her duties, and lived away from him. In 1886 she married Nicolini (stage name for Ernest Nicholas), the tenor, with whom she lived happily. After his death, a few years later, she married her present husband, Baron Rolf Cedarström (1899).

hostility. To add to the attractions of that memorable season, Henry Irving and Ellen Terry were playing an engagement. It was an embarrassment of entertainment. Adelina Patti appeared again at the brilliant Opera Festival in the old Exposition Building in 1885, and again at the dedication of the Auditorium in 1889. She retained her girlish personal charm in opera, and added to it a certain dignity and refinement and apparently absolute self-possession. She walked the stage as one "to the manner born." This, however, must have been something of an effort, for she once told me that it made her nervous to see her name on a programme, and that when she came out on the stage and faced an audience she had a feeling of fear. She apparently knew the secret of perpetual youth, for to the very last of her stage appearances she seemed to be the Patti of the olden days, fresh, young, and charming. When she was sixty-four, she told a friend that up to the time she was forty she ate and drank what she pleased, but after that followed a stricter regime, never touching liqueurs or spirits, but limiting herself to white wine diluted with soda, eschewing heavy food, and sleeping with open windows but avoiding draughts. In this way she had preserved her youthful appearance. She had preserved her voice so long by her perfect Italian method and avoidance of exposure, and by never forcing it.

Considered purely as a vocalist, Adelina Patti was the most consummate and brilliant singer of her time. In roles requiring grace, elegance, and ornate vocalization she was unrivalled. Her voice kept youthfully

fresh, and her command of it, even to the most delicate shading, was absolute. In runs and staccato passages who could surpass her? Every phrase, every trill, however long, was delivered with the facility and perfection of an instrument. As to her characters, I always liked her Zerlina in "Don Giovanni," for its spontaneousness; her Rosina in "The Barber of Seville," for astonishing technic; and Violetta in "La Traviata," best of all, for its display of all the Patti qualities. She never sang in the Wagner operas, but at one time she wanted to sing Elsa in "Lohengrin." It is said that the Marquis de Caux, her husband, who disliked Wagner, would not let her. She also said once that Wagner wrote the part of Kundry in "Parsifal" for her, but she declined to sing it, as it did not suit her voice and called for "too much screeching." It is likely that she found all the Wagner roles unsuited to her voice. It is fortunate that she did not undertake them. I think Theodore Thomas summed up Patti when he said in his terse way: "Patti's voice was of delicate quality and great charm, easy in delivery, and true, like the song of a bird — but it expressed no more soul than the singing of a bird."

Patti, as I have already said, bade us many sweet and tuneful farewells. The first one was in 1855, she being at that time twelve years of age. Upon that occasion she bade "farewell to America" at Metropolitan Hall in Chicago, and was assisted in the parting by Paul Julien, the violinist, and her brother Ettore. In that concert she sang a waltz song, written by herself and dedicated to "the ladies of America." I think it

was called "Fior di primavera." Its life, however, was very brief. Then she bade us another graceful and touching good-bye in 1882, when she sang in concert in Chicago with Nicolini, who sometimes accidentally sang a note or two in tune. The last farewell which I attended was at the dedication of the Auditorium in 1889. At that time, in her forty-sixth year, she displayed the same ease of manner, the same fine method of vocalization which had so long characterized her, but there were clearly apparent the necessity of husbanding her resources and of greater care in singing, a lack of the old strength in the high notes, and a suspicion of wavering intonation. I heard her at that time in Gounod's "Romeo and Juliet." The waltz arietta failed of an encore, but Fabbri in the "Page's Song" carried off one. That told the story. Five or six years ago Patti was announcing another last, final, *unwiderruflich allerletzte* farewell in Germany. Last year I read that Patti made a final appearance at Belfast, and the good-bye song was "Home! Sweet Home." How she used to sing that simple old melody! And "Il Bacio" and the "Venzano" and the "Echo Song" and "Robin Adair"! She amply fulfilled the prediction of Jenny Lind and Alboni that she would become a great artist. She has delighted thousands with her art, and she now rests upon her laurels, well and honorably earned.

CHAPTER IV

THE PATTIS AND PARODI

CARLOTTA PATTI — DEDICATION OF THE CENTRAL MUSIC HALL IN CHICAGO — A COMPARISON WITH ADELINA PATTI — HER LAMENESS — NATURAL SENSITIVENESS — A SINGULAR COMBINATION OF QUALITIES — HER MUSICAL CAREER — AMALIA PATTI — HOW SHE WAS OVERSHADOWED — CARLOS PATTI — HIS ADVENTUROUS AND MELANCHOLY CAREER — PARODI — WHY SHE CAME TO THE UNITED STATES — HER QUALITIES AS A SINGER

CARLOTTA PATTI should not be forgotten in Chicago. Adelina, her sister, dedicated the Auditorium, but Carlotta, on the evening of December 8, 1879, dedicated the Central Music Hall. The latter has now been demolished to make room for the spread of trade, but its associations, even more pleasant than those of the Auditorium, will always be cherished by its old patrons, and its history marks one of the most interesting chapters in the local musical records. Upon the above mentioned evening Carlotta Patti had the assistance of Kelten, pianist; Toedt, tenor; Ciampi-Cellag, barytone, and Ernest de Munck, 'cellist. I think she was the wife of the latter musician at that time. She made her Chicago debut in 1869 at a concert with Ritter, pianist; Henry Squires, tenor; Prume, an elegant violinist; and Hermanns, the ponderous-voiced basso, who subsequently made a notable reputation

as Mephistopheles in Gounod's "Faust." She made another visit to Chicago in 1870 with Ritter and Hermanns, also with Habelman, the tenor, and Sarasate, violinist.

I have often thought that if Carlotta had not been handicapped by lameness, occasioned by the fracture of her hip in childhood, she would have eclipsed Adelina's fame in opera. She was the more beautiful of the two — indeed she was the most beautiful member of a very handsome family. Her voice was as rich in quality as Adelina's and its range even higher. Her technical accomplishments were fully as wonderful. She delighted in singing music written specially to show off the violin technic. In all these respects she was as bountifully equipped for the operatic stage as her sister, but the unfortunate mishap in her childhood confined her within the narrow limits of the concert stage. Besides these qualities she not only had genuine feeling and fine sentiment, but decided dramatic ability. It was evidenced in every song she sang. It must have been bitter for her to endure her confinement to the concert-room, and now and then she must have envied the brilliant career of her sister in that particular realm of music for which she was so richly endowed. This feeling once came to the surface. It was in Birmingham, England, in 1871. Her manager imprudently advertised her as "the sister of the celebrated Adelina Patti." The Patti wrath flamed up in her, and she refused to sing. When it had cooled down and she had taken the sober, second thought, she consented to appear, but she sent a letter to the press, from which I make the following quotation:

"I did indeed think it strange that under my name on the placards, as well as on the programmes, should have been placed the words, 'sister of Adelina Patti.' Though but a twinkling star by the side of the brilliant planet called Marchioness de Caux, I am nevertheless too proud of the humble reputation which Europe and America have confirmed to allow anybody to try to eclipse my name by the dangerous approximation of that of my dear sister, to whom I am bound by the tenderest affection."

When it is considered that the relations of the two sisters were reported at that time to be friendly but not intimate, much may be read between the lines of this diplomatic note. The member of the family with whom she was most intimate was her unfortunate brother, Carlos, whom also she most closely resembled in facial appearance.

Carlotta Patti's nature was made up of a singular combination of qualities. When among her intimates, she was the very soul of good nature, and I have seen her when she was bubbling over with fun and sparkling with repartee. But with strangers, or persons seeking to make her acquaintance out of mere idle curiosity, she was reserved and forbidding. She was by nature imperious and haughty, quick tempered, and brusque of speech. She was very fond of social functions, although her lameness prevented her from dancing. She was also devoted to dress and personal adornment, and was luxurious in her habits and fond of elegant ease,—conditions which may have been superinduced by her physical impediment.

Carlotta Patti's musical career, though confined to the concert stage, was exceptionally brilliant. She made

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AMALIA PATTI STRAKOSCH

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her debut in 1861, and her success was instantaneous. She gave concerts all over this country and Europe, and became a universal favorite. She died in Paris, the city she loved best, in 1889. The gayety and excitements of that city just suited her pleasure-craving nature.

With one sister queen of the opera, and another sister queen of the concert-room, what was left for Amalia Patti but a quiet, uneventful stage life in this double shadow, the applause only of those who really knew something about music, and devotion to the interests of her manager-husband, Maurice Strakosch? She was graceful and handsome, — all the Pattis were, as I have said. She was an excellent singer, as a matter of course, being a Patti. She had decided talent, but it was not sufficient to place her in the highest rank. Unlike her two more gifted sisters, she had a contralto voice. She was the oldest child of the second marriage, and made her debut in "Beatrice di Tenda," at the Astor Place Opera House, New York, in 1847. Maurice Strakosch first met her in 1848, when arranging a concert tour with Anna Bishop, Parodi, and herself. They were married at the close of that tour, and, as far as I know, "lived happily ever after." She came to Chicago during the tour, again in 1853 with Steffanone, Paul Julien, and her husband, who was an excellent pianist, the most dignified of managers, and most philosophical of men. He always rose superior to the accidents menacing the box-office and the absurd caprices of artists. Amalia Patti's next concert visit was in 1854 with Ole Bull. Her voice was not a powerful one, nor was it

very dramatic, but she was always an enjoyable singer. It was a pleasure to listen to her smooth, quiet, melodious, and well-trained manner of singing, as it was to watch her pretty face, her graceful, high-bred personality, and the quiet elegance of her stage deportment. She appeared many times in Chicago in opera, and while she never roused wild enthusiasm with furious outbursts of declamation or brilliant feats of technic, she was a favorite with musical people because they were confident she would do everything correctly. I have known an audience to go wilder over a single sforzando of Brignoli's, a high C of Wachtel's, or one trill by Adelina Patti, than they would over an evening of perfect ensembles. In a word, Amalia's career was colorless because it was continually in the Adelina-Carlotta penumbra.

I never met Carlos Patti, the brother, but once. He was born in Lisbon and studied the violin in Milan. Then he went with his half-brother Antonio to Mexico and played in concerts. He was of a roving, adventurous nature and had so many of the Southern qualities that he became a favorite in New Orleans, Mobile, St. Louis, and other Southern cities. He was in the Confederate States Signal Service and for a time was a member of General Beauregard's staff during the Civil War period. He did not remain long in the service, however, but drifted about from place to place. At one time he was leader at the New Orleans Opera House, at another at the Wakefield Opera House, St. Louis, and at another conducted Fisk's opera troupe. It was about this time, I believe, that he estranged himself from his family by

marrying a member of this troupe. He made one or two visits North, and it was during one of these, in 1863, that I met him. He was in the same company with Gottschalk, Brignoli, and Angiolina Cordier. He was a handsome, graceful young fellow, but reserved, melancholy, and evidently disappointed with his career and his life. It was difficult to make conversation with him, he was so shy and reticent. He had all the family pride, but he knew he had not kept up the family prestige or kept pace with its success. He alone of the four was not well received. He played accurately and skilfully, but coldly and perfunctorily. His heart was not in it. He had had many troubles, and at last the burden became too heavy for him, and he died alone in St. Louis in 1873.

I have mentioned Parodi in connection with Amalia Patti and must say a little about her, as she played quite an important part on the concert and opera stage during the fifties. Maretzek had an opera company in New York in 1850, and when he heard of Barnum's contract with Jenny Lind, he prepared for a struggle by sending to London for Parodi. She had been a pupil of the great Pasta and had a European reputation behind her. As an offset to the Barnum fictions. Maretzek started the story that just as Parodi was about to leave London, the Duke of Devonshire offered her his hand and fortune, but so great was her sense of duty that she declined both rather than break her engagement. Other myths were set afloat by Maretzek, but he was no match for Barnum in short stories. The people had caught the Jenny Lind fever, and Maretzek and Parodi

must perforce wait until it subsided. After it had run its course, Parodi had quite a little success under Maretzek, and later under Strakosch and Mapleson, and deserved more, for she was really an excellent artist. She was of the Italian type of beauty, tall and stately, and a prima donna of the robust school. Her voice was rich in quality, and she sang in good tune and not without brilliancy, although she was often intensely energetic and "ranted," if I may apply that dramatic term to singing. Her commanding presence and superb posing were very effective in such roles as Semiramide and Norma. She was in Chicago many times during the fifties — in 1851 with Amalia Patti and Arthurson, the tenor; in 1855 with Amalia Patti and Giovanni Leonardi, the tenor; and in 1856 with Tiberini, the tenor, Morini, the barytone, Paul Julien, the violinist, and Henry Ahner, the cornetist of the famous Germania Orchestra, which had disbanded a short time before. All the prima donnas were patriotic in those days, or at least found it profitable to cater to the popular patriotism, as will be observed in more than one instance in these pages. So at this concert Parodi sang the unsingable "Star-Spangled Banner" and the "Marseillaise," which last she delivered with as much vigor as if she were shouting it on a barricade to the mob of the Paris streets. In 1859 she was a member of the first regular Italian opera company which appeared in Chicago. I do not remember her after that.

CHAPTER V

THE GERMANIA SOCIETY

THE GERMANIA SOCIETY — GUNGL'S OPINION OF AMERICANS — CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GERMANIA — ITS VISIT TO CHICAGO — A CRITIC'S SOUL-LONGINGS — THE SOCIETY'S LASTING INFLUENCE UPON MUSICAL PROGRESS — THE WORK OF INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS — THE CAREER OF CARL BERGMANN — THE SAD END OF HIS LIFE — JULIEN, "THE CHARLATAN OF ALL THE AGES" — HIS EGOTISM AND ECCENTRICITIES — THE "FIREMEN'S QUADRILLE," ETC.

I HEARD the Germania Orchestra play in Boston before I came to Chicago. This remarkable band, officially known as the Germania Society, was the real pioneer of instrumental music in the United States, and deserves to occupy first place in the history of early musical progress in this country by reason of the high standard which it maintained, the new works which it introduced, and the model which it set for the then existing orchestral organizations. There were orchestras at that time in New York, Boston, and a few other places, and there had been some European bands here before the Germania Society arrived, the best of which was Gungl's from Berlin. The latter, however, did such an unprofitable business that the disgruntled Gungl went back to Berlin and made a savage onslaught upon Americans. He declared that they were incapable of enjoying music and much preferred circus riders, rope dancers,

beast tamers, giants, dwarfs, and such like freaks, to musicians. Gungl said this more than fifty years ago. It is curious in this connection to note that Chaliapine, the Russian basso, after his operatic engagement in this country in 1908, said he pitied Americans because they had "no light, no song in their lives," and that they are "children in everything pertaining to art." Be this as it may, it does not affect the high esteem in which the Germania Society was held by lovers of good music.

The Society came to this country in 1848, and gave concerts for five or six years. They were not profitable, and it disbanded after a prolonged effort to gain a foothold. Nearly all its members remained here and continued their labors for the higher music individually. It was a comparatively small orchestra, but it was composed of earnest, honest, cultivated musicians, who believed in their art and presented it in the noblest form of exposition. It was a hard road they travelled, but they never lowered their standard nor degraded themselves by submitting to commercial considerations. When they could go no farther, they continued their work individually, as I have just said, and several of them took high rank as musical educators. The Society introduced its audiences to the classic symphonies. It incited local orchestras to more convincing work and paved the way for that orchestral development and musical progress achieved by Carl Bergmann and Theodore Thomas a few years later.

The first conductor of the Germania Society was Lenschow, who became disheartened and resigned in 1850. His place was filled by Carl Bergmann, first 'cellist in

the Society. Business improved under his management, but notwithstanding its acknowledged reputation, its technical ability, and its extraordinary solo work, for nearly every member was an accomplished solo performer, it disbanded in 1854, after having given concerts in nearly every part of the country. During its travels the Society visited Chicago in 1853, with Camilla Urso, the violinist, then a mere child, and Alfred Jaell, the pianist, as soloists, and upon that occasion Chicago heard a symphony for the first time. It was Beethoven's Second. A short time before this the Society had played the same symphony elsewhere, and a reporter for the "Chicago Journal" thus naively expressed his musical soul-longings:

"In St. Louis and Louisville the Germania Orchestra has played a whole symphony of Beethoven and has really brought tears to the eyes of musicians and amateurs. How we should like to witness a performance of such a symphony! Never, perhaps, shall we have an occasion during our lifetime to hear such a performance!"

It is consoling to know that the Second Symphony was not his Carcasonne. His pathetic longing for symphonic joy was satisfied, for a few weeks later the Society played the same work in Chicago. I regret, however, that I have been unable to find any record of his feelings on that occasion. Perhaps he was too greatly overcome to trust them to cold type. But I have found what he said about the Society's second concert, and much to my astonishment discover that he transferred his affections to the sepulchral "Zampa," for he says:

"The concert was magnificent in all its parts, especially Zampa's grand overture. The audience was never more enraptured. Camilla Urso, a child of twelve, performed some of the most difficult pieces that were ever composed for violin. The whole band won golden opinions. We heard some of the best judges of music remark that it was the best instrumental concert ever given in Chicago."

This is not very searching criticism, but it clearly describes the reporter's liking. I regret that he was silent about the effect of the Second upon him, but perhaps, like the old lady in the Louvre, he had seen the Apollo Belvidere and Raggles and preferred Raggles.

After the disbanding of the Society, Carl Zerrahn, the first flute, was for many years the accomplished conductor of the Boston Handel and Haydn Society. Carl Bergmann became leader of the New York Philharmonic Society. William Schultze was for many years first violin in the Mendelssohn Quintette Club and afterwards professor of music at Syracuse University. Carl Lentz became an orchestra leader in Philadelphia, and Albrecht and Plagemann were leading spirits in the organization. Thiedemann went to Baltimore, where I believe he is still living, and did a great work for music in that city. Henry Ahner, first cornet, went to Chicago and organized orchestral concerts of a high order.

Of all these men, Carl Bergmann was the most prominent and best known as a musician. His instrument was the 'cello, but he understood them all. He was well equipped for leadership by his musical scholarship as well as by his executive ability, and he kept

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pace with musical progress. He was the first to introduce Wagner and Liszt in this country, while conducting the New York Philharmonic concerts, though it was Theodore Thomas who developed the recognition of these composers into a close intimacy. He was for a considerable time also a member of the Mason-Thomas Quartette, which fought the early battles for chamber music. Bergmann went to Chicago in the fifties to lead its Philharmonic Society, but retired in disgust when he found that local musicians were engaged in a cabal against him. With all his ability and his scholarship, however, Bergmann was not an industrious worker, nor was he regardful of his duties. If his associates took the initiative in such periods of neglect, it angered him. At last he gave himself up to an indolent, pleasure-loving manner of life, and this alienated many of his musical associates. Near the end of his career he became very despondent. Friends abandoned him, and he died at last in a New York hospital in 1876, almost alone and forgotten. But he was a great musician, and greatly advanced the cause of music in his earlier and happier days.

It was not long after hearing the Germania Society that I went to a Julien concert. There never was but one Julien; there never will be another. Theodore Thomas, while conceding his ability, aptly called him "the charlatan of all the ages." He was the vainest of men in his dress, adornments, and personal demeanor. His egotism was so sublime that he made no concealment of his conviction that he was a great genius. His gestures and gyrations in conducting were even more

absurdly violent and eccentric than those of the present acrobatic Italian conductors in the summer gardens. It was a joyous spectacle to see him sink exhausted into his chair at the close of one of his grotesque programme music stunts, with his rose-colored gloved hands tightly clasped and wearing an expression of mingled satisfaction and superiority that exasperated men and thrilled women. He produced many descriptive pieces of his own, with huge bands, provided with more accessories for evoking noise than Tschaikovsky even dreamed of in his "1812" overture, and with more singular sounds than Strauss produces in his "Don Quixote" symphonic poem. The one I particularly remember is "The Firemen's Quadrille." It was performed in the days when Mose asked Sykesey to "take the butt" while he "lammed" a gentleman of the rival machine who was standing on the hose, but neither Mose nor Sykesey encountered a conflagration fiercer in its progress than "The Firemen's Quadrille." Julien may be credited with introducing programme music of the melodramatic sort in this country. It is entirely logical that he should end his days in Bedlam.

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CHAPTER VI

SOME VIOLINISTS

OLE BULL — HIS PERSONALITY — MANNER OF PLAYING — A DREAMER — UNSATISFIED VISIONS — THE ROMANCE OF HIS LIFE — HIS NUMEROUS FAREWELLS — CONCERTS IN CHICAGO — REMENYI — HIS FAR WANDERING — EXTRAVAGANCES AND MANNERISMS — A MEMORABLE AFTERNOON — SUDDEN DEATH — VIEUXTEMPS — CHARACTERISTICS OF HIS STYLE — NILSSON'S BIRTHDAY AND "THE ARKANSAS TRAVELLER" — WIENIAWSKY — RELATIONS TO RUBINSTEIN — GAMBLING LOSSES — WILHELMJ — AN INTELLECTUAL PLAYER — CAMILLA URSO AS CHILD AND WOMAN — HER LAST DAYS

I BEGIN my recollections of the famous old violinists with Ole Bull, not because he was the greatest of them — far from it, — but because for several curious reasons he was the best known and most popular. One of these reasons is purely personal. He was tall, strongly built, with a fine, erect figure, kindly eyes, and light hair which became snowy white before his long career was ended. He was a typical Norseman, and looked, while playing, as Frithjof might have looked when he sang his farewell to the North on the deck of Ellida. His personality was so magnetic that even musicians overlooked his eccentricities and occasional trickeries of technic. It added to the effect of this magnetic influence that he had a poetical nature, sympathetic disposition, and vivid imagination — in a word, he was a dreamer, but not an inspired one.

Though greatly lauded, Ole Bull was not a great musician nor a great artist. He was rather a wandering Blondel, who played most fascinatingly. It was impossible to resist the magic of his bow even when you suspected it of sleight-of-hand. Who could believe that his closing pianissimo did not end and vanish into the air long before his bowing ceased? And yet who did not raptly listen and wonder, as if he really recognized the ghost of the last tone floating off? Perhaps it was a ghost, but this ghostly practice was not artistic. With what exaggeration he was praised one or two instances will show. George William Curtis wrote that his playing was "smooth as the summer seas, embosoming deep chromatic shadows and full sunlight, but no lesser things," and Lydia Maria Child called him "a Persian nightingale." It may be objected that these two were not musicians, only rhapsodists. But old John S. Dwight surely was musical to his finger tips, and he said that his playing was "between a canary's and a thrush's singing." It is a long distance from a canary's shrilling to a thrush's luscious melody, so that Dwight's comparison is somewhat misty; but it shows that Ole Bull bowled him over like all the rest.

Ole Bull was capricious, but he was so strong in individuality, so fervid of nature, so graceful and yet so vigorous in his work, and so hypnotic in his appeal, that he had little difficulty in carrying away any audience captive. Sometimes there were individual exceptions. A certain critic in the early fifties wrote: "Mr. Woodruff performed on the violin scientifically and gave some most exquisite touches that would gore Ole Bull. By the bye,

Mr. Bull does not seem disposed to come this way again. Perhaps he has heard of Woodruff." At one of his concerts in Peoria an old farmer came to the door of the hall and asked Maretzek when all that confounded fiddling would stop. Maretzek asked the man if he did not like music. "Yes," said the farmer, "but I did n't come to town for that. I want to see the old bull and go home."

Ole Bull belonged to no school. Perhaps that was another secret of his success, for people neither know nor care about schools, but like a player to be himself. Ole Bull certainly was all that. He imitated certain of Paganini's eccentricities by attempting effects of a bizarre sort, but yet he was always Ole Bull. He reminded you of no one else, and he always played Ole Bull in all his versatile moods. To this extent he was the most eccentric of modern virtuosi, with Remenyi a close second. Who but these two would have climbed to the top of Cheops' Pyramid and played for the benefit of the Sphinx? He rarely attempted the classical, probably because it is so unyielding in construction that it does not admit of moods or humors, so his repertory was comparatively small. He resembled Paganini in another respect: he was an ordinary composer. He wrote two pieces in this country, "Niagara" and "Solitude of the Prairie," but they were ephemeral. He was more at home in variations and Norwegian fantasies like his own "El Saterbesok," some measures of which he wrote out in his sprawling notation and gave to me with the remark that it was one of his favorites. And when the kindly faced old man, lovingly bending over his

violin with his eyes closed, played these fantasies, I used to think he was at his best. Perhaps they called up visions of the land he loved very dearly and for which he made many sacrifices. He was, as I have said, a dreamer; but, alas! few of his dreams came true. He dreamed in 1855 of being an impresario, leased the New York Academy of Music, and five or six performances under his management ended this dream. Then he dreamed of a great school of music with opera for its basis, but it came to naught. In 1876 he had a dream of giving Italian, German, and English opera. All the great artists were to be engaged, and Verdi was to write an opera for him; but the dream was only an iridescent bubble — nothing more. Then he dreamed of establishing a Norwegian colony in Pennsylvania for the benefit of his countrymen, but he fell into the hands of swindlers and lost heavily. He dreamed of a national theatre in Norway, but whenever was a national theatre successful without a government back of it? It is not remarkable that he was a dreamer, for his life was tinged with romance from his childhood, when he devoured fairy tales and the sagas of the Northland. He travelled far and wide, and everywhere popular love and popular enthusiasm followed him. He was almost as much of a nomad as Remenyi. Perhaps it was his *Wanderlust* that made him uncertain about returning to a place when he left it, and was the cause of so many *Concerts des Adieux*. He began farewelling at an early period of his career, and kept it up to the last. My records show that his first appearance in Chicago with Adelina Patti, April 21, 1853, was announced as

OLE BULL AS A YOUNG MAN
[From a rare Norwegian print]

OLE BULL IN MIDDLE LIFE

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a "Farewell to America," and yet he said that lonely word three times more, on April 26, May 2, and December 14 of that same year. (I wonder if any one remembers that at the concert of April 26 coupon tickets were used and ushers employed for the first time at a concert in Chicago.) Why, you could n't drive Ole Bull away! He loved Chicago, and Chicago loved him. On June 29, 1857, he gave "one farewell concert" with Harrison George, an English ballad singer, Horncastle, most delightful of buffo bassos, and Dressler, pianist, and on the next evening gave a second concert, which was "a positive farewell." In 1868 we had another parting, when he came with Madame Varian Hoffmann and Edward Hoffmann, pianist. In April of the following year he came to us with the gloomy tidings that he must say a last loving good-bye, as he was going to Norway, never, never to come back, and we sorrowfully parted, never expecting to meet again; but lo! in 1872 the big fire had hardly cooled before he was here again with Gertrude Orme, soprano, Candidus, the big sweet-voiced German tenor, and Alfred Richter, the pianist, as chief mourners. Then there was another farewell in 1877, when he came with Isidora Martinez, the pretty little Spanish soprano, Tom Karl, the tenor, and Emma Thursby, expressly to say farewell. In 1880 he was here on the same errand with Alfred Pease, the Beau Brummel of the keyboard, Brausen, tenor, and Ferranti. Does any one remember Ferranti's inimitable singing of "Bevare, bevare, she is a-fooling thee"? Ole Bull appeared here as regularly after a farewell as "the flowers that bloom in the Spring, tra la"! But

there must be a last time, and it was in 1880, for shortly after he left us the delightful, kindly old man died.

The name of Remenyi next suggests itself to my memory, for this Hungarian in some ways resembled Ole Bull. He was even more nomadic. His home was everywhere, and he was everywhere at home. He was a Romany roamer by instinct. He wandered farther afield than Ulysses and his "disastrous chances," and "moving accidents by flood and field" were as numerous as those which Othello related to Ophelia's father. He played in European cities, on the Pyramids, in the South Sea Isles, in the African diamond fields and among Transvaal kopjes, in New England schoolhouses, Southern plantations, and Western mining camps, amid the pomps of courts, the conventionalities of concert-rooms, and the flippancies of vaudeville theatres. Though a Hebrew by nationality, he had all the gipsy traits, and it was the czardas which were his chief delight and highest inspiration. He looked as unlike a professional musician as it is possible to imagine. He was short, corpulent, heavy-featured, and somewhat shambling of gait. A stranger might have mistaken him for a *bon vivant*, or a justice "with good capon lined," but his looks belied him, for he was at no time in his life "a very valiant trencher man." On the contrary, he was a most austere ascetic at table. A friend of mine in Chicago, wishing to entertain him, once gave him a dinner of several courses. He declined the oysters, soup, and fish, and seemingly appalled by the *entrées*, called for crackers, milk, and water. During

my acquaintance with him he neither smoked, nor drank even light wine.

Remenyi had certain little tricks of technic like Ole Bull, and what seemed to be affectations, such as swinging his bow around his head like a scimitar and smiting the strings, but I do not think he meant it as an affectation. He had the same magnetic effect upon audiences as Ole Bull, but not produced by his personality, for he had not the impressive physique of the Norwegian. When in the mood, he could play to musicians so that they sat up and listened. He could always play to the people and set them wild with enthusiasm. He performed the czardas with the true gipsy feeling, and the "Rákóczy March" so that you understood why its fiery rhythm roused the Magyars to revolution. It seems to me, however, that he played best when free from the restrictions of the concert-room and the distractions of an audience — in musical *negligée*, so to speak. I spent a Sunday afternoon once with him at the house of a mutual friend. Vogrich, his *protégé*, a young musician of extraordinary talent, who has since become a lost Pleiad, was at the piano and played his accompaniments. It was a hot day, and Remenyi soon shed his coat. I can see him now, pacing the room and playing piece after piece, softly talking to himself, and now and then calling attention, with pardonable vanity, to the manner in which he played a phrase or produced an effect, his face wreathed with smiles, for he was the soul of good nature. I do not think he was really vain. He simply had an abiding, unshaken faith in Remenyi. The signature to the

letters he wrote to me usually occupied the larger part of the page, and curious polyglots they were, sometimes made up of half a dozen languages! He never spoke in an uncertain tone about his playing. After performing a Hongroise at a friend's house, he walked to the mantel, stopped the pendulum of the clock, and solemnly said: "Let this clock forever mark the hour when Remenyi played to you." His egotism was colossal, but it was the harmless egotism of a child. To return to the extempore concert. It lasted until dinner. He was in the playing mood, as well as Vogrich, and neither thought much about time. Their programme reached from the Bach "Chaconne" to Hungarian folk songs. Remenyi's memory was prodigious. At the close of one piece Theodore Thomas, who was present, asked him to play a certain concerto. Remenyi replied that he had not played it for many years, but he would do his best. My friend brought the score to Vogrich, and Remenyi played the violin part, still pacing the floor, without missing a note. Like Ole Bull, again, he had no school. He was uninfluenced by precedents and careless of traditions. He played Remenyi. His tone was bright and appealing, his mastery of technic absolute. He once told me that he always played for one person in an audience. His words were: "There is sure to be in every audience at least one heart to which I may talk. That is enough. I fix my eyes upon him; we understand each other." He was not an intellectual player, like César Thompson or Wilhelmj, for instance, but an emotional, impulsive, temperamental player, governed by vagrant

fancies and the moods of the moment. He had extravagances and mannerisms, for he was a creature of caprice and impulse. He was always a child, and he kept the freshness, buoyancy, and optimism of childhood to the very last. And how mournful his end! He died in San Francisco in 1898, from the effects of an apoplectic stroke while playing in a concert. But he died as he had wished. In a letter to a friend some months before his death he wrote: "I know and I feel that I shall die in harness. Yes, my dear boy, I shall die fiddling." He was a worshipper of beauty, a musical poet whose fancies were informed by the Oriental spirit. In his quaint way he once said: "All beauty is a spree to me. It is so I live my life. It is thus I keep life happy when I am getting old myself, for life could get very, very dreary if one did not search out the sprees." Possibly if he had studied severely and grounded himself in the classics, he might have been a greater artist, but he would not have been Remenyi. His favorite maxim was, "Die echte Verklärung in dem Kunst ist das ewig natürliche" ("The true ideal in art is eternally the natural"). Certainly Remenyi lived up to that ideal. In one of his letters to me, received not long before his death, he writes: "I have been playing now many years. But my arm is still strong, and so I will keep on. And I will play after I have gone, ten million years, for the cherubim and seraphim, *nicht wahr?*"

Going back again several years, I come to Henri Vieuxtemps, one of the great violinists of his time. He

lived in a violin atmosphere, for he began playing almost as soon as his tiny hands could hold a bow. He was on the concert-stage at six and touring at seven. He came from Belgium, which has produced so many excellent string players, to this country in 1846; but I first heard him in 1857, and again in 1870. In 1857 he played in Chicago with Thalberg, — a rare combination, for Thalberg was considered the leading pianist of that period; but a mysterious misadventure, of which I shall speak when I come to the pianists, suddenly cut short the Western tour. Some rather crude Wild West criticisms, with pointed suggestions for more tunes and less flourishing, probably helped to make it easy for him to have the tour come to any sort of a close. One of these critics went so far as to say that Vieuxtemps was a good enough fiddler considering his opportunities, but he would n't go to hear him again unless they reduced the price of tickets to sixty-two and a half cents a dozen. During the season of 1870 Vieuxtemps returned to Chicago with Christine Nilsson, and I had the pleasure of meeting him personally and very informally. The occasion was a birthday dinner which Nilsson gave to some friends, and I shall refer to it more in detail when I come to speak of that Swedish fascinator. Vieuxtemps was there, and the function lasted far into the small hours. Several of the artists present did extraordinary stunts, and conventionalities were thrown to the winds. It was a ludicrous spectacle, that of Vieuxtemps unbending far enough to play "The Arkansas Traveller," following it up with "Money Musk," in the most rollicking manner. His violin bubbled over with fun as

the player stood leaning against the piano upon which Brignoli was improvising a genuine vaudeville accompaniment, the great Belgian looking as solemn and lugubrious as if he were concertmeister for "Siegfried's Tod." At the close of "The Arkansas Traveller" there was wild applause, but he only looked up with a kind of sickly and far-away expression, as if he were inwardly saying his *Peccavi* to Frau Musica for the affront he had put upon her. He was plain of appearance and seldom smiled, so that his seriousness still further accentuated the ludicrous performance. He was a very quiet man in those days, but in his early life he had been quite gay, and fond of adventure and a good time. He also had a temper of his own, but age had sobered him down. Upon this Bohemian occasion he was the personification of dignity.

Vieuxtemps was in most respects the best trained and most cultivated violinist of his day, and played with an elegance of style, a richness of tone, and a perfection of technic which have rarely been excelled even in these days, when the woods are full of good violinists. He died three years after I met him, a wretched sufferer from paralysis of the arm which had been so industrious, ophthalmia, pneumonia, and finally congestion of the brain, caused by an accident. If he had accomplished nothing else, all violinists would have respected his memory, for he left them a concerto which even yet has not been outlawed, but holds its place still in the violin repertory.

Wieniawsky, the Slavic violinist, whom Theodore Thomas called "one of the greatest violinists of the ages,"

was remotely connected with Vieuxtemps, for he left his American tour before it was finished to take the place of violin teacher in the Brussels Conservatory, made vacant by Vieuxtemps's illness. He first came to this country in the season of 1872–1873 with Rubinstein, under Maurice Grau's management, and after giving several concerts a combination was effected with the Thomas Orchestra, and they gave memorable concerts. They set the standard for piano, violin, and orchestra playing. Wieniawsky had been solo violinist for the Emperor of Russia for twelve years before he came to the United States, which suggests that Czars have some compensatory enjoyments even if they are targets for bomb-throwers. He was a master of his instrument, and played not only in artistic style, but with a fervor and at times a boldness and dash that thrilled you. It was a delight to hear him play his own "Legende" and "Polonaise," and a still greater one to listen to his passionate performance with Rubinstein of Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata. The two players were admirably mated, both trained musicians, skilled interpreters, and players for whom difficulties did not exist, and both infused with a divine fury at times. Will any one who heard that performance of the great sonata ever forget it? I met Camilla Urso one evening not long before she died. The Thomas Orchestra a few nights before had played Mr. Thomas's arrangement of the Kreutzer Andante and variations for strings. We were speaking of it, and I remarked that I had not heard it before since Rubinstein and Wieniawsky played it. "But," said the little solemn-faced lady, looking at me out of those big

AUGUST WILHELMJ

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expressive eyes with an inquiring glance, "you did not want to hear it again, did you?" That expressed its effect in a word.

It was not long after I saw Wieniawsky that he died. He had a bad temper, and Rubinstein had a worse one, and the old friendly relations were soon severed. They never spoke to each other again. His health broke down, and he lost nearly all his earnings at the gaming-table and in speculations, for gambling was one of his passions. I have often wondered why it is that the violins gamble so frequently. I cannot recall violas, 'cellos, or double-basses doing it. I am quite certain the trombone never loses money by chance, and that the bassoon, clarinet, and trumpet never take risks in any kind of game. But I know of several violinists who every now and then have "gone broke." Is it because the violins alone of the orchestral family have all the wild, wayward, passionate work to do, and the other instruments have more staid, dignified, and conservative duties to perform?

Tidings of the death of August Wilhelmj, Wagner's concertmeister at the first Bayreuth performance of the "Nibelungen Trilogy," comes as I am writing this chapter. In some respects he was the most impressive of all the violinists I have heard. He made his Chicago debut in a concert with Carreno, Kate James, and Tagliapietra in 1878, but I best remember him in a Turner Hall Sunday afternoon concert, amid a cheery *Gemüthlichkeit*, which soon developed into a wild display of *Enthusiasmus*. He was a man of dignified presence, fine figure, and commanding aspect, with a face that reminded

me a little of Rubinstein. He had absolute command of the resources of his instrument. I have heard no other violinist with such breadth, nobility, and distinction in his work. His tone was not only pure and beautiful, but it was big and noble, a sonorous clang, indeed, of most majestic sort, which was well adapted to the higher music. He seemed to evoke the noblest qualities of his instrument, and his repertory was largely composed of the works of the masters. His technic was devoid of tricks of any sort. With all his qualities so honest, legitimate, and noble, and with all his broad musical culture, he had not the popularity of some of the other players I have mentioned. I do not think, indeed, that he would have valued it if he had had to secure it by the same means, for he was first musician and then violinist, and his playing above all was intellectual, and marked by classic repose, noble dignity, and most sonorous volume. And what Wilhelmj was as virtuoso he was as man, — a man of solid attainments, sterling character, scholarly and literary culture, and one of the most delightful of talkers.

And now there comes into my memory a little maiden, hardly in her teens, playing the violin with all the ease, facility, and self-possession of a mature artist. She was a most serious child, with large dark eyes and with a manner and dignity that seemed strange in one so young. I do not think she was ever childish. Her face was so solemn and unchanging in its expression that it seemed as if a smile had never visited it. She began playing the violin in her sixth year. I think when I first met

and heard her she was about fourteen, and she then appeared on the stage as if born to it. Even as a child Camilla Urso was an extraordinary player, with a remarkable technic as well as purity of tone. I next heard her in 1866, when she played in a Philharmonic Concert in Chicago, and again in 1867, when she appeared with the old Boston Mendelssohn Quintette Club, then in all its glory.* She was then in her twenty-fourth year, but still had that same pale, serious, inscrutable face, the same dark, lustrous, melancholy eyes, and the same calm but gracious dignity of manner; but with the advancing years she had gained a more finished style, greater individuality, and exquisitely graceful motions of the arm in bowing. Camilla Urso was a true, honest artist. She had no affectations, no trickeries. Everything she did was legitimate. She had travelled far and wide. Few if any women violinists have travelled as far, and everywhere she made a success of enthusiasm and was recognized as an artist of distinction. But suddenly she dropped out of the musical world as a performer. Why she did it I think no one knows; but possibly she may have felt that she had reached the limit of her ability, or her physical strength had begun to wane. When I recall that little serious maiden who visited me one day so many years ago, the young woman who travelled so far and played with great orchestras and with great artists and made her name known and honored, not by press agents and advertising, but by her own merits, the

* The original Mendelssohn Quintette Club was composed of William Schultze, first violin; Carl Meisel, second violin; Thomas Ryan, clarinet and viola; Edward Heindl, flute; and Wulf Fries, cello.

woman who suddenly dropped out of her profession, and in the closing year of her life sought to make a living by hard teaching and died almost forgotten, I sometimes wonder what that mask of seriousness hid behind it.

CHAPTER VII

SOME PIANISTS

THALBERG AS MAN AND ARTIST — HIS SUDDEN DISAPPEARANCE — GOTTSCHALK — HIS MUSIC AND STYLE — AN AFTERNOON WITH HIM — RUBINSTEIN AND THE AMERICAN TOUR — VON BÜLOW AND HIS PECULIARITIES — JAELL AND THE DRUM — A PROCESSION OF PIANISTS — WEHLI, THE LEFT-HANDER, AND THE GREASED PIANO — "BLIND TOM" AND HIS FEATS — CARRENO

THALBERG came to Chicago in the mid fifties. The city at that time was hardly graduated from its five-finger exercises, but it was greatly excited over the advent of a real pianist and put on its best clothes to go to the Thalberg-Vieuxtemps-D'Angri concerts, for it had heard that Thalberg was one of the world's greatest players and it wished to do him honor. It was not sure it would intelligently appreciate him, but it would at least pretend to do so. Then, again, few great artists had visited Chicago up to that time. True, Ole Bull had been here, but he came quite informally, like one just dropping in for dinner; but here was a distinguished guest, son of a prince and a baroness, a grand virtuoso, an elegant man of the world, a favorite of courts, and all that, and he must be received politely. So Chicago turned out in full force and finery, and Thalberg played to "large and fashionable audiences."

The triple combination came to Chicago in 1856. Madame D'Angri, contralto, was a handsome, stately woman, with wicked eyes and a fine voice. A contemporary criticism in one of the city papers will show how Chicago rose to the occasion: "Thalberg's melodies are of a simple character, like the ripple of the waves on the beach of a summer evening when the moonbeams sleep on a placid sea. To our mind this is a mark of the highest genius. The profoundest philosophers always find its illustration in the commonest objects; witness Plato and Him who spake as never man spake. The concert last night was a triumph." The citation is interesting as showing the *naïveté* and terseness of criticism in the early days, but the reader must remember that the city was very young in the early fifties, that one could shoot wild pigeons on the North Shore, that coyotes used to sneak about on the West Side, and that beyond Twelfth Street on the South Side stretched the lonesome prairie.

Thalberg came again the next season with Parodi, Amalia Patti, Nicolo, and Mollenhauer, and Chicago again made its handsomest courtesy. The series of concerts, however, was left unfinished, for Thalberg suddenly dropped out of sight. One morning the papers contained the announcement that "owing to circumstances rendering Mr. Thalberg's immediate return necessary, the concerts advertised in the West will be indefinitely postponed, with the exception of the one advertised for Chicago, this evening, at Light Guard Hall." What were the circumstances? There was at once a flight of rumors. His agent said he was ill.

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No one believed him. It was reported that he had had a falling out with D'Angri. But most startling of all was the rumor that Madame Thalberg had arrived in New York and was anxious to see him. The manager gave me some information, but it was purely confidential. As long experience with managers has made me distrust their stories, confidential ones in particular, it is not worth relating, though the confidence was outlawed long ago. Besides, I doubt not it was idle gossip.

Notwithstanding his aristocratic antecedents, Thalberg was not a distinguished looking man, nor had he any of those personal affectations cultivated by musicians who wish to be known as such. His playing was almost entirely confined to his own operatic fantasies, like the "Moise" and "Lucia," and as he was absolutely at home at the piano, this of course made largely for the success of his playing. These fantasies were something new in the world. The melody of the aria stood out very clearly in the midst of a most dazzling display of scales, arpeggios, shakes, and coruscations of every sort, and the whole keyboard was none too big for the exhibition of his elegant and absolutely perfect technic. But there was no more soul in it than there is in the head of a kettledrum. It was simply marvellous mechanism. Our sentimental critic was clear off the track with his "rippling waves" and "sleeping moonbeams." It was rather a pyrotechnic display, with the rockets left out, for Thalberg never soared. The real attraction of his work was its elegance and its clearness, even in the most intricate mazes with which he enclosed a melody. He had a host of

imitators, and the Thalberg fantasies were all the rage for a time. Every little piano thumper tackled them. But Thalberg, his school of virtuosity, and his fantasies are now only memories. The fantasies to-day are as empty as last year's birds' nests.

Two or three years later came Louis Moreau Gottschalk. He was the rage for a time. He was a charmer at the piano and fascinating as a fellow-being. I think he made his first appearance in Chicago in December, 1860, with Carlotta Patti, and what a handsome couple they were! I am not certain as to the exact date, but I am sure about the extraordinary performance at one of the concerts of the "Tannhäuser Overture" arranged for five pianos, Gottschalk being assisted by Irma de Pelgrom, Franz Staab, Israel, and Behrens. That performance would have made Wagner himself sit up and take notice. Gottschalk was here again in 1862 with Carlotta Patti, when she gave us the "French Laughing Song" and the "Venzano Waltz" for the first time, as only she could sing them, and in 1864, when, together with Lucy Simons, soprano, Morelli, barytone, and Doehler, violin, he opened Smith and Nixon's Hall, on the corner of Clark and Washington streets. This was Gottschalk's farewell season.

Gottschalk was often criticised for the class of music which he played. It consisted principally of his own compositions, "Bamboula," "Le Savane," "Recordati," "La Marche de Nuit," "O ma Charmante," "Le Mancilliner," "Ojos Creollos," the "Berceuse," "Last Hope," and others. In reality, the music which he

played was not a fair test of his taste or his ability. He once told me that he played these and similar pieces because people liked them, and because he needed the money they brought him, for his own expenses were large, and besides that he was supporting five sisters and a brother at that time. Gottschalk was a great lover of Beethoven's music, especially the sonatas. How well I remember the last time I saw him! We spent an afternoon together in 1864, and he played for me in his dreamy way the so-called "Moonlight" sonata of Beethoven, some of Mendelssohn's "Midsummer Night's Dream" music, and his "Lieder ohne Wörte," running from one piece to another with hardly a pause except to light a fresh cigar or interview the merry Widow Clicquot. I remember asking him why he did n't play that class of music in his concerts. He replied: "Because the dear public don't want to hear me play it. People would rather hear my 'Banjo,' or 'Ojos Creollos,' or 'Last Hope.' Besides, there are plenty of pianists who can play that music as well or better than I can, but none of them can play my music half so well as I can. And what difference will it make a thousand years hence, anyway?" All his music was either sensuous or sentimental, for he was tropical by nature, — a wayward, passionate creature, who delighted in reveries and wild, strange rhythms. He had an extremely delicate touch, and a singing quality which I have never heard excelled. And yet he had great power when it was needed, for he was a very strong man, notwithstanding his delicate appearance. Personally he was very fascinating. He had beautiful hands, and was

as vain of them as Artemus Ward used to be of his. He had a fastidious way of encasing them in the most immaculate of gloves, which it took him some time to remove before he began to play. This was not an affectation, as many thought. He said it gave him time to compose himself and get at ease. As he was very shy, he did not make many intimate friends. He was poetical in his conceptions, and yet had a keen sense of humor. He used to exhibit with great glee the following poem, written by a New Orleans bard, which he said was the loveliest tribute ever paid him:

I

I could sit entranced and drink,
And feel thy mellow music sink,
Deep, deep in my bosom's core,
Till liquefied, I felt nothing more;
My soul all wrapt up in ecstasy,
And my frame in numb catalepsy.

II

From heaven the listening star
  Entranced looked down
And stopped the heavenly car
  By charm unknown,
And I with mournful strain
  The whippoorwill
Beyond Lake Pontchartrain
  Rejoice I will.

His last letter to me, enclosing his picture, was written from Rio Janeiro only a few weeks before his death. It seemed fitting that he should die in the tropics which he loved so well, for the nature of this Hebrew Creole was tropical.

Rubinstein was master of them all. He comes back to me most vividly in his concerts at Aiken's Theatre in 1872 with Wieniawsky, and Louise Ormeny and Louise Liebhart, two mediocre vocalists. He was the Jupiter Tonans of the keyboard. His personal appearance was impressive. He was athletic in mould, his head was large, and his hair luxuriously abundant and carelessly worn.* His features were rugged, reminding one of some of the portraits of Beethoven, whom he also resembled in some of his traits of character. He was outwardly a cold, stern man, with a face as rigid as stone. He almost utterly ignored audiences, and the more frantic the applause the less likely was he to recognize it. It was only when he was disturbed by the idle chatter of people that he recognized any one, and those recognized under such conditions were not likely to forget the manner of it. He was a man of strong passions, but in performance they were tempered by his dominant artistic nature. He could play with tremendous power, sometimes with such vehemence as threatened disaster to the wires, and, on the other hand, his melody-playing was characterized by a delightful singing quality, for with all his energy, which sometimes appeared ferocious, he still had great beauty of tone. When it is considered that he played everything from memory, and that his repertory embraced hundreds of compositions for piano alone, as well as

* I have sometimes wondered why it is that violinists and pianists so often belong to the long-haired genus. I cannot recall a long-haired 'cellist or double-bass player. 'Cellists usually are also short and fat, like their instruments. Trombonists and cornetists are usually short-haired, and ophicleidists and bassoonists are nearly always bald.

concertos, and that he never practised, only now and then going to the piano to run over a few measures of a piece he had not played for a long time, his great talent will be best appreciated. He was at his best, it seemed to me, in concertos. By his titanic power and impulsive force he not only made his piano take its proper place in the sea of sound, but he fairly led the orchestra in an authoritative manner. In a word, he dominated audience, players, and sometimes conductors. Such playing had not been heard before and is not likely to be heard again, for no one can imitate him. He has left no school. He belonged to no school. He was a great musician playing Rubinstein.

It is somewhat strange, considering his great success and the large remuneration he received, that he was dissatisfied with his American tour, with the business arrangements, and with piano-playing altogether. It is a little consoling, however, to know that he disliked England more than he did the United States. He once said in my hearing that Americans were too much engrossed with the love of money to have a real love of art, but they were more impressionable than the English, who were the most unmusical people on earth. I have heard more than one eminent musician say the same thing. In one of his letters about this time he says: "I put myself for a certain time at the entire disposition of the impresario, and may God preserve you from ever falling into such slavery. It is all over with art; only the shop remains. You become an automatical instrument and the dignity of the artist is lost." Long after this tour he wrote to a friend: "The whole time

I was displeased with myself to such a degree that when a few years later another tour was proposed to me with the offer of fees amounting to half a million, I flatly refused."

Rubinstein had peculiarities which society might call rude, such as his impatience with interruptions or distractions of any kind while he was playing, and his refusals to attend receptions and social functions or to exhibit himself for the gratification of lion-hunters. Critics of a small kind did not like him because he refused to recognize them as a class. And yet there have been few musicians who were more genial or larger hearted than Rubinstein, and never was there a more honest or conscientious musician. His purpose in coming to this country was to raise the standard of art, but he found he was expected to lower his own standards, and this he was too honest to do, so his tour was a disappointment. Perhaps also the fact that he was eager to abandon the keyboard altogether and devote his entire time to composition may have contributed to his dissatisfaction. But who could make his instrument play with such superb control? Who could impart to it such an orchestral effect, even to the shimmer of strings and the shrilling of trumpets, and thus ennoble it and give it a dignified position in the instrumental family?

I first heard Von Bülow in 1876. A numerous flight of stories, growing out of his musical and somewhat peculiar domestic relations with Liszt and Wagner, preceded his coming, and his departure was followed by a

long trail of myths and romances. His was an interesting personality. He was a little below medium stature, with receding forehead, large, sharp eyes, a somewhat belligerent aspect, and martial bearing. Perhaps it was this latter feature in his make-up that made him so partial to the drum, which he used to say quieted his nerves and soothed his temper because drum-beating was true rhythm. Though he was small in figure, he was big in spirit and tense of nerve, and he played with both as well as with great power and extraordinary facility of technic. He was autocratic, at times belligerent, and was even more impatient with audiences than Rubinstein. I saw him once leave the piano in a rage because a lady in the front row was fanning herself out of time. She did not desist until an usher explained to her the cause of his sudden flight. But when engaged in playing, and everything was normal in the audience, he was very cool and self-possessed. He had a phenomenal memory, as is well known, and his exploits with the Beethoven sonatas and the symphonies when he conducted them do not need retelling. His programmes were noble models and his readings a fine display of musical scholarship. He bid good-bye to Chicago in May, 1876, and went away, taking with him the good-will of Americans. He was not so fortunate with his own countrymen. Some of them had sharply criticised his readings, particularly of Beethoven. In a parting speech he alluded to it as "beer criticism," censured his countrymen for their copious libations to Gambrinus, and followed it up with a general philippic on beer-drinking. This was too much for the Teutonic

temper in Chicago. Hence the outbreak. Probably it did not worry the little man much, for he dearly loved a row.

I recall several other pianists, but I can only refer to them briefly. Among them are Alfred Jaell, who came to this country with the Germania Society, already referred to, — a showy, brilliant player in the Thalberg manner, and a charming, likable man, whose greatest delight, moved perhaps like Von Bülow, by sense of rhythm, was to beat the bass drum when the Germania drummer had a night off; De Meyer, the Vulcan of the keyboard, who astonished every one with his rapidity and nearly deafened them with his thundering sonority; Rivé-King, who came in the eighties, and of whose work I principally remember that wonderful shake in Liszt's Second Rhapsody; Essipoff, the Russian lady, who played Chopin divinely and without the antics of another well-known Chopin player, and who was one of the most refined and poetical pianists I have ever heard; Joseffy, who made his Chicago debut in 1879, a most graceful, polished player, who was a great favorite for many years, but has practically retired now, I believe; poor Rummel, a player of much ability, who showed the first symptom of musical decline by a sudden loss of memory at a concert I attended; and Anna Mehlig, a fine, well-trained musician, who first appeared in Chicago with the Thomas Orchestra. Mr. Thomas used to call her his "piano pounder" because of her massive tone. He was a warm admirer of her musical ability and artistic playing and once said to me she was almost the only one

who played under his baton to whom he did not have to give a thought. He knew the piano was all right and so could give his entire attention to his orchestra.

I must not omit Wehli, the left-hander, from my list, though "he never would be missed." He made a specialty of pieces for the left hand alone, whence he derives the above sinister appellation. His name recalls a ludicrous episode which happened many years ago in the Crosby Opera House, during a German opera season. Grover, the manager, very foolishly arranged for piano solos by Wehli in the *entr'actes*. Habelman and Hermanns were respectively the leading tenor and basso. Upon one occasion Wehli took his seat at the piano, ran his hands over the keys, suddenly held them up and looked at them, and left the stage. A "super" came in and wiped the keys carefully, and Wehli returned. Supposing that he had been offended because of dust on the keyboard, I somewhat sharply criticised his action on the next morning. In reply, I received the following note explaining the situation.

TREMONT HOUSE, Sunday.

"DEAR SIR,—Your remarks would have been very just you made that day but I hope you will permit me to explain the reason for my wanting to have the piano cleaned. The Germans are jealous at my uniform success and at the kind support I receive from the critics. The piano was besmeared with German lard or tallow of some kind about half an inch thick and prevented my playing as the fingers slipped about. I would feel deeply obliged if you would give this affair proper publicity in your valuable paper. JAS. M. WEHLI."

I learned afterwards that the greasing of the keys was done by Hermanns and Habelman. Hermanns's

artistic sense of the unities was affronted because he thought the piano solo interrupted the movement of the opera, and Habelman was enraged because Wehli had expressed an ardent desire to slap the face of the sweet singer of "Adelaide," though for some unknown reason he never gave himself that pleasure.

"Blind Tom" can hardly be classed as a pianist, but as a *lusus musicæ* he was certainly remarkable. He flourished in Chicago in the seventies, but he had been exhibited in public eight or ten years previous to that time. He had a wonderful memory, though it was given out that he was feeble-minded. It added to the remarkable character of his feats that he was also blind. He had had no instruction and did not even know the rudiments of music, and yet he could play three airs at once and repeat any piece after a single hearing of it, rarely missing a note or striking a false one. He enjoyed his own performances quite as heartily as his audience did, and when they applauded he joined in, clapping his hands with great glee. His father and mother were slaves in Georgia, and when they were offered for sale, the price was $1500 *without* Tom and $1200 *with* him. His purchaser made a fortune exhibiting him. I think he is still living, but whether he retains his musical faculty I do not know.

When I began this work, I intended not to recall any one now actively engaged in the profession of music, but Carreno is nearing the close of her remarkable career and has proved such a striking exception to most musical experiences that I cannot refrain from

saying something about her. She is one of the few infant phenomenons who have more than made good the promise of childhood. She was born in Venezuela in 1853, and consequently is now in her fifty-fifth year. As a child she was possessed of great personal charm and beauty, and she is still a beautiful, stately woman. As a young player (I first heard her, I think, in 1863) she was moody, sometimes playing divinely, sometimes recklessly, as she happened to feel. Time, however, has softened her moods. She is growing old in years with exceeding grace and growing old in music with all the grace of the finished artist. When I heard her only a few evenings ago, playing poor MacDowell's Concerto, it seemed to me that the kindly faced, gray-haired woman played far more artistically than she had done as the young woman of passionate moods, and that she had developed wellnigh perfect artistry. I remembered her well as a girl, and now, after all these years, it was pleasant to sit and listen again to her playing and recall the old days with a pleasure not marred by the old lament, "*Eheu, fugaces anni!*"

CHAPTER VIII

SOME PRIMA DONNAS

NILSSON — QUALITIES OF HER SINGING — HER MOODS AND HABITS — MANY ADMIRERS — A MEMORABLE BIRTHDAY — PAULINE LUCCA AND HER ROMANTIC CAREER — ETELKA GERSTER — A BRIEF AND BRILLIANT CAREER — THE FAMOUS GERSTER-PATTI EPISODE — LAGRANGE, MINNIE HAUCK, AND MARIE ROZE — ANOTHER FAMOUS EPISODE — KELLOGG AND CARY — CADENZAS AND CAR VENTILATION — MATERNA AND LEHMANN — TWO GREAT WAGNER SINGERS — LEHMANN'S PLEA FOR THE ANIMALS

IF ever a prima donna has had a charmed life it is Christine Nilsson. I wonder was it because she was the seventh child of a seventh child! She told me so once with such a serious expression of face that I think she really believed in the numerical significance. It seems to me but yesterday that I saw her, — tall, willowy, with high cheek-bones, expressive blue eyes, flashing teeth, ash-colored hair, and shapely hands. The outlines of her face were a little severe, yet how attractive, even fascinating, she was, especially if you happened to see her in her favorite color of gray! And can it be possible that she is now a sedate, retired old lady in her sixty-fifth year? It must be so, for all the "Who's Whos" affirm she was born in 1843.

Christine Nilsson first appeared in concerts in Chicago with Brignoli, Vieuxtemps, Verger the barytone, and

Annie Louise Cary, and during the same year (1871) she sang in the oratorios of "The Messiah" and "The Creation" with Imogene Brown, Annie Louise Cary, Alexander Bischoff, and Myron D. Whitney. She also sang here in concerts in 1883 with Hope Glenn, Del Puente, and the Mendelssohn Quintette Club, and in opera in 1884, as well as in "The Messiah" and "Elijah," with the long-ago defunct Oratorio Society. Has any one who heard her sing in the great duet from "The Huguenots" or "I know that my Redeemer liveth" ever forgotten it? She had a voice of remarkable sweetness and beauty, vocalization of the most skilful and fluent sort, and brilliant fioriture. She had a peculiar grace of manner and seemed to sing with her expressive eyes and every motion of her supple figure. She was also capable of producing certain rare effects, such as the *sotto voce*, which she would employ when she wished to make an unusual impression, so that in one sense her singing appeared calculated. Her finest operatic roles, it always seemed to me, were those of Valentin in "The Huguenots," in which she reached a powerful dramatic climax; Alice in "Robert the Devil," which afforded her an opportunity of displaying her qualities in all their perfection; the title role of Mignon, which was rewritten for her,* and in which she was very fascinating by reason of her remarkable singing, though she was not so great a Mignon as Lucca; and Marguerite in "Faust." I have seen every variety of Marguerites from the passionate to the cold-blooded, from satin-gowned and bediamonded

* The part was originally written for mezzo-soprano voice.

Marguerites to Marguerites in peasant garb. The stage Marguerites indeed seem to belong to one extreme or the other, — all nature, all art, or all nobodies; but Nilsson found a happy medium by a combination of art and nature, though again her Marguerite was not so great as Lucca's. But whose was, unless it was Ellen Terry's on the dramatic stage? It is a long slant from Gounod's garden music to burnt-cork minstrelsy, but how effective she made "The Old Folks at Home" — a fitting pendant to Patti's "Home, Sweet Home!"

Nilsson was a singular bundle of moods, contrarieties, and little superstitions, and yet she was a sunshiny, optimistic creature. She would have made an accomplished diplomat. She could say more without committing herself than any one I ever knew. She always observed a most courteous demeanor before audiences and had a personal appeal in her singing that gave each one in the audience the impression that she was singing for him or her. She never permitted herself to be disturbed or surprised or to confess she was in an awkward situation. She had no quarrels with her fellow artists, for she kept a naturally imperious disposition in check, nor did she display jealousy, except perhaps upon one occasion when she forced her manager to give her a sum equivalent to that which Mapleson was paying Patti. She was diplomatic in her card-playing, of which she was fond. Upon one occasion, during a game in the Lenten season, a caller was announced. The cards disappeared as if by magic, and the caller found her deeply engrossed in a devotional work and reluctant to be torn away from it. Here is one of her diplomatic little speeches to an

audience: "I am so sorry to bid you good-bye, but perhaps I will come back, buy a little home, and stay with you always, if you will let me." Was there ever neater blandishment for a guileless, unsuspecting audience? Oh! but she was a past mistress of flattery! Here is an extract from one of her diplomatic letters: "I love the Americans. I send them my love, and I beg them to understand that on no account would I quit the stage without singing again in the United States. I am sorry I cannot go again this year, but I cannot. They are not to think it is because I do not want to. I long to see your country and your people once more. Some of the dearest friends I have in the world are there. They are all my friends, are they not? I assure you I admire America, and I want you to say so. And don't forget to give them my love, and say I shall be sure to go and see them as soon as I can." Nilsson was also democratic as well as diplomatic. As the gallery is not in the habit of passing bouquets up to the stage, she now and then would provide them herself, and have some one take them to the upper proscenium box and throw them to the stage at the proper time. Then she would pick them up, kiss them, lift her eyes with a rapturous smile, and thus acknowledge the gift the gods had sent her. She also had her little superstitions, which she sought to overcome by carrying a horseshoe with her as a mascot. A gipsy once told her she must beware of fire. She lost somewhat heavily by the Chicago fire, and also by the subsequent fire in Boston, against which her horseshoe failed to protect her. Her superstitions, however, were harmless, for she had strong common sense back of

them. It was eminently sensible advice which she once gave a young operatic aspirant: "It is not enough to possess a voice and knowledge of music and some histrionic talent, or whatever it is, to carry you through an opera; you must be physically, brutally strong. It is the knowledge of this which makes lyric artists so sensitive when they are said to be ill. They know that without physical strength to sing through such an opera as 'Lohengrin,' for instance, art, talent, genius, what you will, are of no avail."

Nilsson had a host of admirers of all conditions. She once wrote: "My ambition is to make heaps of money, invest it well, fall desperately in love with a handsome man, and in the course of time go back with him and a couple of handsome children to Sweden. I should like to ride about with them in a nice carriage, showing them to old friends." There was once some gossip about her betrothal to Gustav Doré, the artist. He proposed to her, but was rejected. Far from being discouraged, he proposed a second time, whereupon she told him she would take six months to think it over; but at the end of that time her reply was in the negative, and Doré retreated from the field. She had a devoted admirer in Chicago in 1871, one Jerome Meyer, who seized every opportunity to see her at the Sherman House, followed her carriage in the streets, and at last went to the hotel with a coach and four to urge her to elope. It became necessary to call in the police and have the frenzied suitor removed. But, as Nilsson said in the above letter, she did make heaps of money, and invested it, and although she lost some of it, she married a handsome

man; for the half Creole, August Rouzaud, was a very handsome man with a very cavalier manner, as I remember him. But he was not happy long. He was possessed with the idea that he was responsible for her financial losses, and when he tried to make up for them, he only made bad matters worse. This preyed upon his mind so continuously that reason finally gave way, and he was removed to an asylum, where he died. She subsequently married Count de Miranda, a Spanish nobleman, and retired from the stage.

My pleasantest memory of Christine Nilsson is connected with her birthday celebration at the Sherman House in Chicago in 1871, to which I have already made allusion. She was in the gayest of moods that evening, waived all the conventionalities, and showed herself a Bohemian of the most rollicking, sunshiny kind. Verger sang musical caricatures of the leading barytones on the stage. Vieuxtemps sacrificed his high art ideas to the humor of "The Arkansas Traveller" and the fascinations of "Money Musk"; Brignoli played his Battle March, which he thought was an inspiration, and was inclined to be offended when he looked round and saw the company, with Nilsson in the lead, doing an extraordinary cake walk to its rhythm, for Brignoli took that march very seriously. Nilsson gave some ludicrous imitations of the trombone, double-bass, tympani, and bassoon, and sang humorous songs. The closing act of the revelry, which lasted far into the small hours, was a travesty on the Garden Scene in "Faust" by Nilsson and Brignoli, in which the big tenor's gravity of mien and awkwardness of love-making

CHRISTINE NILSSON

PAULINE LUCCA

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was admirably set off by Nilsson's volatile foolery. It was a night of hilarity and fun-making long to be remembered. And now I read that the once famous singer spent her sixty-fourth birthday in the Swedish village of Gardsby and delighted an enthusiastic audience with the song, "I think I am just fourteen." I should not be surprised if she honestly believes it, for she is one of the elect who can never grow old in spirit.

While I am writing this chapter, a cablegram brings the tidings of Lucca's death in Vienna. The despatch gives her more stately name, Baroness Pauline Wallhofen-Lucca, but I remember her as simply Pauline Lucca. She was sixty-seven years of age when she died, and had been teaching most of the time since 1884, when she retired from the stage she had so brilliantly adorned. When I saw her she was in the very prime of her career. She made her Chicago debut in 1873 in "Favorita," but not in her best part. Her most successful roles were Zerlina in "Fra Diavolo," Cherubino in "Nozze di Figaro," Zerlina in "Don Giovanni," the title role in "Mignon," Selika in "L'Africaine," and Marguerite in "Faust." Meyerbeer was such an admirer of her talent that he made a codicil to his will to the effect that if Lucca were engaged to play Zelika at the Berlin Opera House, "L'Africaine" might be produced in Germany in the German language. She appeared in his opera in the same year, at London in Italian, and at Berlin in German. Her Marguerite was not only one of the most artistic performances on the operatic stage, but

also an innovation upon the conventional representations of the part, for she was a brunette Gretchen with black braids reaching nearly to her pretty feet. She created as much surprise at the time as Fechter's blond Hamlet did a few years previously. She was a graceful, handsome, and sprightly little creature, a most accomplished actress, and one with the highest regard for dramatic truth and propriety. In fact, it is difficult to say which was her greatest attraction, her beautiful, sympathetic singing, *teste* "Kennst Du das Land?" in "Mignon," or her dramatic power, *teste* the scene with Mephistopheles at the church door in "Faust." If she had devoted her talent to the dramatic stage, she might have been one of the great actresses of her time. She not only identified herself with the character she was representing, but her respect for the unities was so great that she paid little attention to applause or demands for encores.

On the stage Lucca was engrossed with her art. Off the stage, she was a different person. She had a peculiar personal fascination which few could resist. The Emperor William had yielded to it and appointed her his favorite court singer. Bismarck was a victim and frankly declared he would give much to possess a confidential secretary with so clear a head as that of his "amiable little Pauline," and publicly exhibited his admiration by having his picture taken with his "amiable" friend at his side — a German Hercules and Omphale. Even stern old Von Moltke succumbed in spite of all his strategetical defences. She was devoted to the army, and the army was devoted to her, and it was this

devotion which led to her romantic marital experiences. She had an offer from Prince Lobkowitz, but notwithstanding his musical traditions, she rejected him, whereupon he generously got himself killed in a duel. The story of her two husbands is interesting. The first one, Baron von Rahden, was wounded in the Franco-German War, and she went to the military hospital to nurse him. The second husband, Baron Wallhofen, a cavalry officer, was wounded at the same time, was an inmate of the same hospital, and shared her attentions. In 1872 she brought a suit in this country for divorce from Von Rahden without his knowledge, alleging infidelity as the cause. He tried to have it set aside subsequently, but failed, and consoled himself by promptly marrying the object of Lucca's jealousy. Thereupon Lucca married Wallhofen, who had followed her to the United States, and, I presume, lived as happily and contentedly with him as such an impulsive, exacting little woman could. Like the Duchess of Gerolstein, she dearly loved "the military." She would have made a stunning *vivandière*. In private life she was quite democratic, plain of speech, unassuming of attire, and fond of *Wurst* and *Schwarzbrod* — perhaps because they were military rations. She was also frank, forcible, and independent in expression of opinion. Upon one occasion I was her neighbor at dinner, and observing that she frequently held her hand to her head, I asked her if she was in pain, to which she replied she had a headache. She then proceeded to anathematize both her head and the ache with most ornate and ingeniously combined German military expletives. Evidently she had no use for expletives which

were not military. Ordinary ones were inadequate to express her feelings or relieve her mind. Then, again, they were the vernacular of the camps, and for this reason she chose them. Perhaps also, as she was at that time somewhat tangled up in the affairs of her two soldier barons, they may have been a still further relief. Anyway, they seemed to comfort her and restore her equanimity, for she soon was vivacious and talkative and became the life of the company. She evidently was not overcome with the consuming love for America which Nilsson displayed with such protestation. She had just come from New York, which she described as a colossal city with a million people indefatigably trying to get each other's money away. It would take another Columbus, she said, to discover any appreciation or enjoyment of the artistic or intellectual there.

Now this sprightly little woman has gone and will never have headaches again nor deliver delightful military expletives so bewitchingly as she did that evening. *Requiescat in pace.*

Etelka Gerster, the Hungarian singer, who made her Chicago debut January 13, 1879, had one of the shortest and most brilliant careers on record. One week she was a comparatively obscure vocalist, and the next week a dozen cities were competing for her. Her first performance spread her fame all over Europe. She was a meteor in the musical firmament, shooting into sight out of the darkness, flaming a little way in dazzling flight, then disappearing again into the darkness, leaving no sign.

Gerster was not a handsome woman, like so many of her contemporaries, but her face lightened up pleasantly and displayed a very attractive earnestness in dramatic roles; for while she was by no means a finished actress, she was a natural one. Her voice was a pure soprano without a flaw in it. Her high register was clear and birdlike, much resembling Jenny Lind's, and her middle and low tones were full and rich. She displayed no effort in singing, taking even the most florid passages with perfect ease, and this facility, joined with her clear, pure tones, the carrying power of her voice, her precision of pitch, and her wonderfully brilliant fioriture, made her one of the most attractive and popular singers of her day. It is a pity that such a splendid career was so short-lived. She was in this country several times, but the last time, in 1885, there could be no mistake. That exquisite voice was in ruins and beyond hope of restoration. Could it have been saved and could she have had a few more years on the stage, Patti, Nilsson, and all the other artists of the period would have had to look to their laurels, for she had every requisite of the perfect singer. She was not powerfully dramatic, like Lucca, for instance, but the public are not in the habit of looking to the operatic stage for actresses. When they do they are usually disappointed.

Off the stage Gerster was a very enjoyable person to meet, as she had no affectations and did not care to talk shop. She was quite domestic, an accomplished housekeeper and excellent cook. At hotels she usually sent for the chef and arranged the details of her menus with him. If these arrangements failed in the slightest

degree, she would get angry, for she had a quick temper. Once she told the proprietor he must discharge his chef, for he had put too much salt in her soup. On another occasion she wished for olive oil, and the bottle Miss Kellogg had been using was brought to her. She would not even look at it, and ordered it taken away with the remark that it was horrid stuff and fit only for an American. The situation was a little strained, for Gerster did not like Miss Kellogg and of course would not like what Miss Kellogg liked. But as Miss Kellogg was more difficult to suit than Gerster, except when her mother did the cooking, it is most likely that the oil was good enough even for the Hungarian.

The most interesting event in this artist's career was the Gerster-Patti war. It was not a very long one, though it reached from Chicago to San Francisco, but it was hot and spectacular while it lasted. The two singers were in the same troupe on one of Mapleson's Western tours and were mortally jealous of each other. Mapleson unwisely incensed Gerster by showing favors to Patti. When they appeared together on the stage, Patti would receive a profusion of flowers, some of them official, doubtless, but Gerster would get the most applause, and this so embittered Patti that at last she refused to sing at the same time with her. One day Gerster saw a poster with Patti's name on it larger and blacker than hers, whereupon she disappeared and was not found for two or three days. Patti declared that Gerster had the evil eye, and that when they reached San Francisco she would probably cause an earthquake. Gerster, however, got back handsomely, for when she saw the

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ETELKA GERSTER

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Governor of Missouri kiss Patti, she quietly observed in Patti's hearing that there was no harm in a man's kissing a woman old enough to be his mother. That settled it. They spoke no more, but regarded each other haughtily from a distance. They travelled in separate cars. When Gerster learned that there was to be an extra concert in Denver, for which she and Patti were billed, she engaged a special train to take her to New York, and it kept Mapleson occupied a whole day in pacifying her with sympathetic appeals and direful threats of the courts. Whenever Gerster's name was mentioned, Patti would make the finger sign to avert evil, and Gerster was not slow in devising similar methods of displaying her tender regard for Patti. At last they reached San Francisco, where the two had a picturesque variety of quarrels; but Gerster mercifully spared the city from destruction by looking at it only with her good eye. The eruption was confined to the troupe. It finally died away with low mutterings and occasional sputterings, but the Colonel told me on his return that even then he could feel some of the seismic vibrations, and that the episode was one of the worst he had experienced in a career which was as liable to cyclonic disturbances as a Kansas prairie.

Anna de Lagrange is now hardly more than the shadow of a name, and yet she was a far better artist than many whose names are recorded in the dictionaries of music. She came to New York in 1853 and was engaged both in opera and concerts for three or four years, appearing several times in Chicago. She was

then past her prime, but she was still an accomplished singer. Her voice was not remarkable for power, nor was her dramatic talent extraordinary, but she was a true artist, and her work showed the results of conscientious study and love of her art. She was extremely modest and dignified in her stage bearing and averse to passionate display in her roles. An interesting story is told in this connection which will serve also to introduce Brignoli, the tenor. They were singing together at Havana, one evening, in "Lucia." Brignoli took the part of Edgardo, in which vocally he was supreme; but that evening he failed to make an impression, and in the last act the house was half empty. This was something new for Brignoli. The next day he asked a friend to explain the embarrassing situation. The friend said: "Why, you sang false and had no heart in your music. Cubans will not excuse such faults." Brignoli somewhat testily replied: "It was not my fault; Lagrange was so cold that she froze me." Brignoli's complaint reached Lagrange's ears. She resolved to be ardent enough at least to convince him that he could not again attribute his bad singing to her want of fervor. In the meantime Brignoli had been communing with himself and came to the conclusion that perhaps he was the freezer. The next evening both of them warmed up, and the result was curtain calls, bravas, and flowers from the warmed-up Cubans. I think both were right, for naturally the two were politely prim and courteously cold. A passionate climax could not be achieved by either of them without a tremendous *tour de force*. But it would be hard to find a more faithful artist than

MARIE ROZE
In "Aïda"

MARIE ROZE
In "Faust"

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Lagrange. She never marred a season with disappointments, never wrangled with her managers, and never descended to the petty jealousies so common among singers. She was a beautiful dresser and fond of ornaments, which was somewhat curious for one so quiet and retiring, but if she had any personal vanities she sacrificed them in favor of her art. Like Lilli Lehmann, she was extremely fond of animals and travelled with quite a menagerie, including three dogs, a parrot, a mocking-bird, and a husband, all docile and well trained. It may well be imagined that the managers looked askance at the entire retinue, for managers do not relish impedimenta of this sort; but they overlooked it in consideration of having for once a prima donna who did not spend most of her time devising ways to evade the conditions of her contract.

I must couple Minnie Hauck and Marie Roze together, though he would have been a bold man to attempt such a feat in 1878. The two artists never loved each other. Perhaps "Carmen" had something to do with it. The title role was originally written for Marie Roze, but she found so much fault with the vagaries of the cigar girl and the music, that Bizet at last fixed it up for Galli-Marié. Meanwhile Minnie Hauck looked the opera over and saw her opportunity. "Carmen" just suited her. The cigar girl did not frighten her in the least. It was just the kind of reckless abandon and strenuous adventure she liked, and she made a tremendous success with the part. Marie Roze, after the opera had become popular, tried it and did not succeed.

She was too gentle and proper for the Seville vixen. Mary's little lamb trying to be a wild-cat is a tame comparison. Then, again, the ladies had husbands. Minnie Hauck's husband was the Chevalier Hesse von Wartegg, a writer of considerable note, whose pen, during opera seasons, was mostly employed in writing requests to the manager and inditing defences of his wife. Marie Roze's first husband was Jules Perkins, the American basso, who died in 1875. She subsequently married Colonel Henry Mapleson, son of Colonel J. H. Mapleson, late of Her Majesty's forces and still later of Her Majesty's Theatre. I give the senior colonel all his titles, for he was very particular about them. He always leaned heavily upon Her Majesty and was thought to resemble the Duke of Wellington. The young colonel not only fought his wife's battles, but was continually planning fresh engagements. He was also an indefatigable press agent for her. It used to be a common saying among members of the company when he came in sight: "*Allons donc! Voila Mapleson, qui nous plante encore une biographie de sa femme.*" Many were the scrimmages which he conducted, but the most ludicrous one occurred in Chicago, and I had the pleasure of being a witness of the movements and counter movements as well as the confidential recipient of the statements both of the Chevalier and the junior colonel. For the opening night of the season of 1878 "The Marriage of Figaro" was announced, with Roze as Susanna and Hauck as Cherubino. At three o'clock that afternoon Hauck went to the theatre and preempted the prima donna's room by depositing her

MINNIE HAUCK

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things therein. An hour later Roze's maid reached the theatre and proceeded to the same room only to find it filled with the hated rival's traps. Roze notified the colonel. He was promptly on the scene and began operations by removing Hauck's belongings to the opposite room and instructing his wife to be at the theatre precisely at six. At half-past five, however, Hauck sent the Chevalier to the theatre to see that everything was right. The Chevalier found that everything was not right and ordered Roze's belongings removed, replaced his wife's, and had everything, including the door, stoutly locked. At six Roze arrived prepared "to hold the fort," but as she could n't get into the fort to hold it she sent for the colonel, who sent for a locksmith, who opened up. Hauck's things were unceremoniously bundled out. At half-past six Hauck came to the room to dress, and much to her surprise and to the Chevalier's chagrin Roze was in there calmly dressing. What passed between them probably no one will ever know, but Hauck went back to the Palmer House and notified Strakosch she would not sing that evening. The Chevalier was promptly on hand to explain why, and the colonel to wonder why not. The volatile Max went into spasms, as was his wont. It would not do to put off the opera, it was too late to change it; so the opera began without Cherubino, Strakosch meanwhile wrestling with Hauck and at last persuading her to change her mind. She finally went to the theatre, appeared when the opera was half through, suitable excuses having been invented, and glared at Susanna until the final curtain,

and then — but a veil must be drawn. One can only say with Virgil:

"Can such deep hate find place in breasts divine?"

Both the ladies were great favorites. Minnie Hauck was a pretty woman with fine eyes, an excellent singer, and an actress both vigorous and vivacious, though now and then she would lapse, as once in the chamber scene in "Sonnambula," when she actually fell asleep and was only roused by the shouts of the villagers. Her finest parts were Amina in this opera, Katharine in Goetz's "Taming of the Shrew," and Carmen. Her belligerent disposition and pluckiness in action may perhaps be traced to the fact that most of her young life was spent in Kansas.

Marie Roze, on the other hand, was amiable, good-natured, and kindly disposed, and an unusually beautiful woman. Her Aïda, Helen of Troy in Boito's "Mefistofele," and Marguerite (though she was a somewhat stout Gretchen) were a joy to the eye. Her *embonpoint* was now and then embarrassing. In "Mignon" Tom Karl rushed into the burning house to save her, but was unable to carry her. Gottschalk, who was something of an athlete, came to the rescue and succeeded. She had a very agreeable mezzo-soprano voice, and she had been well trained; and while not an artist in the grand style, it was always a pleasure to see and hear her.

I must also couple Clara Louise Kellogg and Annie Louise Cary together, for they are two of the most successful American singers. It may interest the reader

who remembers the elegant Kellogg in her palmy days to know what N. P. Willis thought of her when she was a girl of eighteen. He wrote in his "Home Journal": "She has not only wondrous music in her voice but what music expresses in her soul. Mocking-bird like, many have the utterance, but few know the full burthen of what they utter." Kellogg made her debut in her nineteenth year as Gilda in "Rigoletto," enjoyed twenty years of success in concerts, Italian and English opera, both in Europe and the United States, and retired in 1882. She was one of the elegant, aristocratic ladies of the stage, stately in manner and refined to a degree. Her costumes were the envy of the profession and the admiration of audiences, for she was always the best dressed person in the house. She was a fascinating figure as Violetta or Filina, but sometimes her ravishing trousseaus were a little too fine for the characters, for Kellogg was bent upon having them all "walk in silk attire." She had a voice of great compass and beautiful quality, somewhat like Patti's, and her singing was always refined, free from mannerisms, and marked by grace and ease. I do not remember to have heard a more perfect piece of vocal artistry than her singing of the "Mignon" polacca. Indeed, it almost seemed as if the composer must have had her in mind, so perfectly was it fitted to her style.

Kellogg had other qualities besides the musical. She was a good financier, made a good deal of money and invested it well. She was also a smart impresario, and for a time had an opera troupe of her own, which she managed with great success, the operas being given in

English. The troupe included Van Zandt, Montague, Zelda Seguin, Castle, Maas, Carleton, Hamilton, Peakes, and Conly. Maas, a good actor with a beautiful tenor voice, had an amusing experience upon one occasion. He was of light weight, while Kellogg was of generous size. They were singing together in "Trovatore," and in a scene where Leonora makes a passionate rush to embrace Manrico, the little tenor, unable to withstand her momentum, was upset. Some of these sudden stage upsets are very funny. I remember seeing Gazzaniga start from the back to the front of the stage in the most impressive manner, with eyes uplifted and arms upraised, to sing her aria, and when halfway there, sit squarely down with a "thud" anything but "dull." Whatever it was that tripped her, it brought her down as well as the house.

Kellogg preserved her fine singing quality to the last and had the good sense to retire before vocal impairment or age compelled her to do so. She was very fortunate all through her career, but much of her good fortune was due to her mother, a shrewd, sensible woman, who fairly adored her. She took the best of care of her and her voice, went to the theatre with her, and at the close of the performance was ready with her wraps, and guarded her against draughts all the way back to the hotel. She prepared her food for her and saw that it was nourishing. She was equally careful of her at functions, for her daughter was a great favorite in society. She never made herself obnoxious to managers and never disagreed with them. She simply stood between her daughter and all disagreeable

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CLARA LOUISE KELLOGG
In "La Traviata"

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things, so that the latter was absolutely care free and not exposed to anything unpleasant. There was one exception to this, however. She and Cary were once naughty girls, though in reality they liked each other.

No one could really dislike Cary. No one ever sang herself deeper into the hearts of the people. Cary made her first appearance in Chicago at a concert in Farwell Hall in 1870, and her operatic debut took place three years later, when she appeared in "Aida" as Amneris, with Campanini as Rhadames. In 1874 she also sang the part of Ortrud in "Lohengrin" with great success, in 1879 and 1880 was a member of Kellogg's Concert Company, and a year or two later sang with Gerster. Indeed, what did she not sing? Operatic roles from Amneris to Nancy in "Martha"; oratorios, ballads, in Handel and Haydn concerts; and in all the big Cincinnati festivals until she retired in 1882 and married. She had a noble contralto voice of violoncello quality and a free and facile manner of singing which appealed to every one. She appeared at home on the stage, though she once told me that she often suffered from stage fright, and she was at home with her audiences, for she was fairly radiant with kindly good humor, though she never carried familiarity too far. She was simply a Maine girl, fond of neighbors wherever she found them. She was democratic and unconventional, and her friendly, sonorous "Hello" was but the expression of her warm, sunny nature. She was as unlike the popular conception of an operatic artist as it is possible to imagine. Prima donnas are not usually hail fellows well met. They do not carry their sewing on

the trains. They do not mingle with people. They do not give you a stout grip of the hand. They do not break out into sunbursts of smiles or resounding laughs, or send wireless despatches to friends in the audience. Once Cary went to an Illinois town to sing and had to put up at an inferior hotel. The room to which she was assigned was not clean. The windows were dingy. It was forlorn and uncomfortable, but it was the best room in the house. She ordered the maid who showed her up to bring a broom, a pail of water, and a mop, and help her clean up. In a short time the room had undergone a change into "something rich and strange," and Cary, feeling relieved, for she could not abide dirt, sat down with her knitting and awaited the hour for the concert. Strakosch, when her manager, paid her a high compliment by declaring that, well or sick, she was always ready to go on and do her best. She could sing every night and never complained when suddenly called upon. "She is a jewel!" said Strakosch.

The trouble between Cary and Kellogg, to which I have alluded, was not very serious. It occurred on a trip to San Francisco. The first spat was about a cadenza in which Kellogg was a little tangled. Cary said that Kellogg broke down, and Kellogg declared that Cary broke down. She said she ought to know that cadenza, as she had sung it scores of times. Cary insisted that she sang it right, and Kellogg insisted that she did n't, and which of the two was right or wrong no one knows to this day. The audience supposed both were right, as it did n't know anything about it anyway.

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ANNIE LOUISE CARY

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Then they had a radical difference of opinion about car ventilation. Kellogg wanted the car warm, Cary wanted it cold. If it were too warm, Cary would go to the back platform, sit on a campstool, and leave the door open. "Why," said Kellogg to me, "I had to have a curtain put up so as to keep from freezing, and would you believe it? she slept all that night with the ventilators open. She did, really!"

I think the cadenza and car ventilation were the most serious troubles in Cary's long and happy career. Perhaps it is not too late for Mrs. Raymond and Mrs. Strakosch even now to get together and settle those two problems. They might regard them more dispassionately and from a broader point of view.

I must close this chapter of memories with some reference to the two great Wagner singers, Materna and Lehmann. Materna, who made her Chicago debut in 1882, presents a singular study in musical evolution, for she began singing in Offenbach and Suppe roles. Then she entered upon grand opera via "Don Giovanni" and "L'Africaine," and at last became Wagner's chosen Brünhilde and the creator of his Kundry, and was identified with his music-dramas until her retirement in 1897. Her voice was admirably adapted to the delivery of the Wagner music by reason of its breadth and power, and her personations were effective because of her thorough study of the parts with the composer* and

* In the above connection I cannot refrain from adding this characteristic story of Materna and Cosima Wagner, now going the rounds of the German papers. Madame Wagner insisted upon her ideas of interpretation in certain passages, Materna combated them. "I learned these

her noble, passionate style of declamation, as well as of her dignified, stately, and impressive personal appearance.

Lilli Lehmann has only recently retired from the stage, and is now teaching in Germany. Her voice was one of great beauty as well as power and flexibility, and her magnetic influence so strong that many who went to scoff at Wagner returned converted. Her personations were so informed with emotional power that few could resist their spell. She was a singer possessed not alone of a beautiful voice, fluent technic, and most engaging presence, but of the rare power of impressing the listener with the beauty of the Wagner conceptions and the dramatic quality of his music. I have often thought that there should be some subtle connection between the song and the singer, and that music would be more noble if sung by a person of noble character; but this is not always the case. It was true, however, in Lilli Lehmann's case, for she was a woman of rare loveliness, kindliness, and nobility. Surely I can offer no better illustration of this than the following letter, which she wrote to the "Chicago Tribune" during her last visit to America, making an appeal for kindly treatment of the animals in the Lincoln Park Zoo, and which is printed here *verbatim et literatim:*

DEAR SIR, — I cannot go out of the country without to leave you a kind of *Testament.* 10 years ago I wrote to the Park and Fooddepartement to gave the foxes and wolves

things from the master himself," she said finally, thinking it would close the incident. It failed, however, for quick as a flash Madame Wagner retorted: "Poor Richard did n't always know himself what he wanted."

boxes where to lay in the night, because *every* animal has his nightquarter made by himself, and I consider it as a cruelty of *highest* unconscience to keep what animal ever 25–30 years in a small cage without place to take exercise, no place to stay or lay warm, without any protection against storm, rain, snow or heat. It is to terrible to think of it, that I could *despair* nearly. I have told this man, Mr. De Vry, 10 years before I told him now. The park is large enough to make some large houses and to put boxes in of lumber for theyr night quarters.

I was yesterday to see the Bronx park in New York. There all the animals have *large* Places to walk, and there is no one who takes his house with straw fillet up. They are unhappy enough to be unfree, and if we take them theyr liberty, we at least must give them all everybody needs.

Please to make up this question in your paper, and dont stop till the RICH Chicago has given to some foxes, wolves and other animals who in theyr distress and unhappiness must give *pleasure* to the unhuman people.

Very sincerely,

LILLI LEHMANN KALISCH,
K. K. Kamersängerin.

NETHERLAND HOTEL.

CHAPTER IX

MORE FOOTLIGHT FAVORITES

ANNE BISHOP'S LONG CAREER — FABBRI AND "THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER" — FREZZOLINI'S VANITY — PICCOLOMINI, THE FASCINATING IMPOSTOR — HER FAREWELL — DI MURSKA — HER CADENZAS AND MENAGERIE — EMMA ABBOTT'S CAREER — ALBANI, THE "CHAMBLY GIRL" — BURMEISTER AND OTHERS

As memory reverts to the past, a long succession of singers comes into review, — good, bad, and indifferent. I can only single out a few of the best, for their name is Legion. Anne Bishop wellnigh belongs to ancient history. She antedated Jenny Lind in this country, for she sang in New York in 1847. She was the wife of Sir Henry Bishop, the English composer, but as he would not consent to her singing in public, she eloped with Bochsa, the famous harpist, so that she might have the opportunity she desired, and then she kept on singing almost forever and a day. The dates are somewhat startling, — birth, 1814; debut, 1831; still singing in 1884, when she was seventy, and not ceasing until death retired her in the same year. She first appeared in Chicago in 1851, with Sanquirico, basso; Lavinia Bandini, violinist; and Bochsa, harpist. No one can doubt her versatility and industry when they read one of her programmes of that season, which testifies that she sang on the same evening "Casta

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Diva," "Sweet Home," "John Anderson, my Joe," "Coming thro' the Rye," an entire scena from "Roberto Devereux," the mad scene from "Lucia," a tableau of Mexican life, introducing Mexican and Castilian airs, and "Hail Columbia," which she sang attired as the Goddess of Liberty. She was not a great artist. Her voice was not of good quality, but she was quite a showy singer, and sing she would. So she kept on singing until "all her lovely companions were faded and gone," and I have little doubt she entered the golden gates singing.

Inez Fabbri was another industrious and sensational singer, but unlike Bishop, she had a fine voice in her day, and audiences always went into wellnigh hysterical raptures whenever she appeared. She too was fond of singing in character. It was in 1861, when the war spirit was in the air, that she came to Chicago, and during that season she sang in Brazilian, Hungarian, and French costumes. Her most dazzling make-up was exhibited on Washington's birthday. A full orchestra was in attendance. The stage was decorated with flags, and Ellsworth's Zouaves went through their evolutions, their handsome captain little dreaming of the personal tragedy so rapidly approaching. At the close of the concert the Zouaves drew up in line, and Fabbri advanced as the Goddess of Liberty, carrying a huge flag which it was all she could do to lift. Bringing the staff down upon the stage with a bang, she rose to her full height, and with stentorian voice began the National Hymn, closing it in this fashion:

"O the shtar spankelt panner, long may she wave
On ter lant of ter free and ter home of ter prave!"

The anniversary itself, the near approach of the Civil War, the flamboyant blare of the orchestra, and the Goddess' struggle with the English, aroused the audience to a pitch of patriotic frenzy.

Frezzolini, whose real name was the unromantic one of Poggi, was another extremely sensational singer. She didn't sing so long as Anne Bishop, but she sang until the last thread of voice was gone. She was a tall and rather elegant-looking woman when in repose, but the moment she began singing, the charm was gone. Her attitude became painfully angular, and her facial contortions and grimaces were distressing. She was an extremely vain woman, and though handicapped, as I have stated, she sought in every way to attract admiration. She had had a brilliant past, had been loaded with jewels and gifts of various kinds, but ruined herself by her extraordinary efforts to keep up her fascinations and play a part in the gay world, and at last died at Paris in obscurity and poverty. She was past middle age when Maurice Strakosch introduced her to Chicago. She had a voice of good compass, flexibility, and strength; but a singer so conscious of herself and so consumed with vanity could hardly be expected to do really artistic work.

The little Tuscan singer Piccolomini comes next in my memory. Oh, but she was a gay deceiver!

MARIETTA PICCOLOMINI

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She had a weak voice of limited range and ordinary flexibility, sang out of tune carelessly or unconsciously, and with no style at all. As a matter of fact she had neither musical faculty nor facility in any marked degree. If the music was easy, she got along fairly well. If it was difficult, she scrambled through it the best she could with a most bewitching smile on her pretty face. She was one of the handsomest, most coquettish, and fascinating of impostors, and fooled the public to the top of her bent, the public apparently not unwilling to be fooled in such a captivating way. She was honest enough to acknowledge it once by declaring: "They call me little impostor, and they give me bouquets and applauses and monies. Why not be an impostor?" Artemus Ward rather cleverly took her measure, although he knew little about music, when he wrote: "Fassinatin' people is her best holt. She was born to make other wimmin mad because they ain't Piccolomini." It was her youth, beauty, piquancy, and chic that carried her through and offset her lack of talent. She even had the monumental audacity to advertise a long farewell to "the American public" in 1859. A short extract will do:

"I came to this country so proud, so free and so charming in its youth and freshness, with high hopes which have been more than realized. An artist who is satisfied is a miracle; so I am a miracle. But perhaps the public, or a portion of it, has been dissatisfied. That is not my fault. I never pretended to divine genius. I would rather stay here than go to Europe. But one, even a spoiled girl and a prima donna as well, cannot always have her own way. So I salute you

all. I would be charmed to do it personally, but the country is so big and the population so immense I fear the time would not be sufficient."

And then the little impostor flitted away with her pockets bursting with gold and was never heard of more.

Di Murska, the Hungarian, was another fascinating though by no means handsome little woman, who made her Chicago debut in 1874 with Carreno, Sauret, Ferranti, Braga of the "Angel's Serenade," and Habelman. She was a music-box with endless possibilities, and few could excel her in spectacular vocalization. She would undertake any flight, and if it were not dazzling enough, would add cadenzas of her own, as she flew along, which were the very extravagance of vocalism. Her resources of flexibility and range were sufficient for any effort, and as she herself was fearless, fantastic, and eccentric, nothing suited her better than to astonish audiences with these spontaneous outbursts. She was a bundle of eccentricities. Her special superstition was a golden belt, which she always wore as a surety of good luck. She had an inclination for marrying, and outlived five husbands of different nationalities, beginning with an Irishman and closing with an American. She carried a menagerie bigger than Lagrange's. It included a huge Newfoundland dog, an Angora cat, two or three parrots, a chameleon, and a trained crow. The words De Vivo, her manager, used to utter, when they were getting ready to leave a city, or when any reference was made

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ILMA DI MURSKA

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to Di Murska's Zoo, would not look well in print. And De Vivo was not an impatient man either.

Emma Abbott was a good little Chicago girl who piously resolved, when Clara Louise Kellogg and Dr. Chapin's church started her on the road to the stage, not to sing in operas which were improper, never to appear in a page's costume, never to sing on Sundays, and above all not to appear in the wicked "Traviata." She made these resolutions when she was quite young, just after she had concertized with the Lumbards, but outgrew them, and ended by appearing in "Traviata," and many other heterodox operas, even in some for which the "Abbott kiss" was specially invented. She was a frequent visitor to Chicago, her birthplace, appearing in concerts, and in Italian and English operas, as well as in some of the Sullivan operettas. She also must be credited with bringing out Massé's "Paul and Virginia" (they were a handsome pair, she and Castle, "under the sheltering palm"), Guarany's "Gem of Peru," and Gounod's "Mireille." She was a slight, pale-faced, sensitive little woman, and an indefatigable worker. She had a very pure, pleasant voice, but some of her mannerisms were unpleasant. At the outset her voice was as rigid as her determination to become a singer. She manufactured a very fluent technic out of this unbending voice, by the hardest kind of work, and richly deserved the success which she secured both in fame and money.

Albani (stage name of Mademoiselle Lajeunesse, afterwards Madame Gye) first appeared in Chicago in 1875,

as Elsa in "Lohengrin." She was a very lovely looking Elsa, but it did not seem to me a great artistic performance, nor did she appear at that time thoroughly informed with the Wagner spirit, though my recollections of her performance of the role may be influenced by subsequent performances of the great Wagner artists. I much preferred her in other roles (for her repertory was very large). She was very successful in oratorio and festival work. Her voice was rich, pure, and appealing, and there was no lack of power. She was born and brought up in an atmosphere of music. Canada was her native country, and the Canadians are very proud of their "Chambly Girl." *

I can only briefly mention among others in this flight of song-birds, Emma Thursby, who was one of the most successful and admired of American concert singers; Ambré, a dramatic singer of great intensity, who fascinated the King of Holland, and Eleanor Sanz, a handsome singer of no intensity, who fascinated Alfonso XII of Spain; Alwina Valleria, a Baltimore girl, who sang three Marguerite roles — Gounod's, Boito's, and Berlioz's, — but who was most charming in English opera; Marie Litta, the Bloomington, Illinois, girl, whose brilliant promise was extinguished by her untimely death; Emma Nevada, a showy singer, whose daughter is just about to come out in opera in Italy; and pretty

* "An' w'en All-ba-nee was get lonesome for
travel all roun' de worl'
I hope she'll come home, lak de bluebird, an'
again be de Chambly girl!"
Drummond's "Habitants."

little Rose Hersee, who sang so delightfully with Parepa in English opera, of both of whom I shall speak more particularly in another chapter.

And last, but by no means least, Mademoiselle Burmeister, the most faithful, the most conscientious, the most reliable, the most willing, and the best equipped all-round artist of them all for every sort of work. I think her repertory must have included the entire list of modern operas, and she was equally at home in French, German, or Italian. She was usually cast for secondary parts, but she was an understudy for the whole prima donna establishment, and I am not certain she could not have taken the tenor and bass roles, or led the orchestra. A manager who had Burmeister on his salary list was sure of his announcements, for she could be relied upon to fill any vacancy. She has now retired from the stage with the respect and admiration, if not the love, of every one connected with it. Her name did not appear in very large letters upon posters, nor was it often observable in newspaper criticisms, but impresarios will look a long time before they find another Burmeister.

CHAPTER X

TENORS AND BASSOS

THEIR COMPARATIVE POPULARITY — BRIGNOLI, HIS STYLE AND VOICE — SUPERSTITIONS AND ANECDOTES — CAMPANINI'S TRIUMPHS — JEALOUSY OF CAPOUL — A BOUT WITH MAPLESON — WACHTEL, THE CAB-DRIVER — OLD-TIME ADVERTISING CURIOSITIES — ADAMS, BEST AMERICAN TENOR — AMODIO AND BELLINI IN THE "LIBERTY DUET" — HERMANN'S INTERPOLATION — FORMES IN CONCERT AND OPERA — MYRON D. WHITNEY'S ORATORIO TRIUMPHS

IF in recalling memories of operatic tenors and bassos it shall seem that those of tenors have more vital interest than those of bassos, it can only be explained by the fact that the tenors are the more popular of the two, and more is known about them. Edouard de Reszke once said that grand opera was ungrateful for bassos, that composers would not write for them and the public would n't pet them, and that "all the big fees go to the prima donnas and tenors, while a basso has to worry along on the pay of a chorus girl." This is the truth. The operatic tenor lives in clover. All the Elviras and Leonoras love him. He has all the love songs and serenades to sing. Whatever stage business there may be in the line of kneeling at the feet of inamoratas, kissing of hands, and embracing of stage heroines, belongs exclusively to him. The ladies send him little billets and adore him in secret.

He has the monopoly of all the pretty music and may sing it badly if he is handsome and interesting. All tuneful lays are his. His roles include the handsome brigands, the dashing cavaliers, the romantic lovers, and languishing swains. The basso, on the contrary, knows that he is not interesting and that the ladies do not care for him. He has no lover roles. If he is a brigand, he is a cutthroat; if a cavalier, he is some dilapidated old duke; if a sailor, he is a pirate; if a father, he is an old dotard. He has no bravura work cut out for him, and his arias are ponderous and often dreary. He has little to do but wander about the stage, an abject picture of vocal misery and dramatic drudgery. Like the operatic contralto, he is a lonely person for whom the public little cares.

Among the tenors I have known, Brignoli always seemed to me the most interesting personality, as well as one of the most captivating singers. He made his American debut in 1856 and was a member of the first regular Italian opera troupe which appeared in Chicago (1859). The season was opened with "Martha," and Brignoli was Lionel. During the next ten or fifteen years he sang in Chicago almost every season, either in concerts or opera, and was a universal favorite. He is said to have been very delicate, as well as timid and nervous, in his early youth, but when I first saw him he was robust and broad-chested, and gradually grew quite stout, in spite of which he always carried himself with a kind of aristocratic elegance. He told me once that he never wholly overcame stage fright,

and I fancy that his lack of pronounced dramatic ability and his awkwardness of gait may have conduced to it. If he found himself in the vicinity of the prima donna, he was always nervous, and in scenes requiring the platonic stage embrace he would implore her not to touch him. Brignoli was an indifferent actor, but he was a master of tone-production. His tones had a silvery quality and were exquisitely pure. He never forced his voice beyond the limit of a sweet musical tone, and rarely expended much effort except in reaching a climax, or in closing an aria with one of those marvellously beautiful sforzandos which other tenors tried in vain to imitate. He never sang the high C, that stock in trade of sensational tenors, though he could reach it with ease, for he had great range and power of voice. He used to say that "screaming is not singing; let those fellows wear their throats out if they will; Brignoli keep his." And he did. His highest ambition was tonal loveliness, and in this quality he had few equals. To hear him sing "M'Appari" and "Il mio tesoro," or the music of Manrico and Edgardo, was to listen to vocalization of absolute beauty, to an exposition of *bel canto* of the Italian romantic school as perfect for a tenor as was Adelina Patti's for a soprano.

Brignoli was curiously superstitious. He never would undertake a journey on Friday, and always timed his trips so as not to arrive on that day. The thirteenth day of the month, thirteen persons at table, or anything else related to these numerals, always frightened him. He was a famous cook and salad maker, but if his macaroni stock boiled over or he spilled a drop of

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P. BRIGNOLI

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oil in making a salad, he was certain some misfortune would happen. He carried a deer's head with him for a mascot, and used to talk and sing to it. At night he would place it on the window-sill to insure good weather for the next day, in case he was to sing. If the day opened brightly, he would congratulate his mascot; but if it opened cloudy and threatening storm, he would pick it up, box its ears, uttering Italian maledictions at the same time, and then not speak to it for a day or two. He also had a superstition about the color of horses, and always stipulated that his carriage should be drawn by a pair of black horses, and, as another sign of good luck, that his manager should wait upon him before he started for the theatre. He was of a generous disposition, — too generous, indeed, for his own good, — and would divide his money with any one. He made a handsome fortune in this country, but lived at such an extravagant rate, and flung away money so lavishly, that he died penniless. He once, and only once, made a speech to an audience. As there was no other person available on that occasion, he was requested by Nilsson to go before the curtain and tell the audience that she was slightly indisposed. After a while he plucked up courage and made the following oration:

"Ladies and gentlemen! Mademoiselle Nilsson is a leetle 'orse, and begs you — a — indulge — ance — a."

As the audience manifested some surprise, Brignoli began again:

"Vat! you do no understand it. Then, I begin again. Mademoiselle Nilsson is a little horse and begs your kind indulgence."

This time he retired amid applause and laughter only to be again confused when Nilsson asked him why he had called her a pony. Brignoli could only throw up his hands in despair. He never ventured to make an address again.

Before taking vocal lessons he had studied the piano and composed some pieces for that instrument. One of them, the march, to which I alluded in a previous chapter, was quite sensational. It was called "The Crossing of the Danube." The introduction, which imitated the booming of cannon, volleys of musketry, and cavalry bugle-calls, led up to the march, which contained vivid reminiscences of Verdi and Meyerbeer, and the piece closed with a climax, based upon the Russian National Hymn, after the manner of Tschaikovsky's "1812" overture. I think he told me he wrote his march for Gilmore. In any event, it was in the style which Patrick Sarsfield greatly loved.

Brignoli's last public appearance in Chicago was in a concert at Hershey Hall in May, 1884. He was in the city again in September of that year. He had retired from the stage, but at a social visit he surprised his friends as he entered by singing "Then you'll remember me" with much of his old-time beauty of voice. At that time he was hoping to establish a school in the near future for the perpetuation of his method of vocalization, but the hope was never realized. A day or two later I met him walking pensively on State Street, and we stopped and spoke together. Patti was then singing at McVicker's Theatre, and was billed to appear in "Lucia" that evening. I asked him if he was going

to the opera. He mournfully shook his head and exclaimed: "No! I cannot afford it, and I will not ask them for a pass. I sang in 'Lucia' with Adelina when she made her debut. To-night she must transpose her part. Old Brignoli can still sing his where it is written. Adelina gets $5000 a night; old Brignoli gets fifty cents." We shook hands and parted. Some friends helped him get to New York, where he died a few weeks later. In his death one of the purest and most perfect exponents of beautiful melody passed away.

Italo Campanini, son of an Italian blacksmith, inherited his father's brawn. He was a fine specimen of the natural, elemental man, and there was much of this quality in his singing, for his lungs were capable of almost any effort, and his throat was equal to any requisition made upon it; but, great singer as he was, there were times when he sacrificed musical effect to mere noise. He had an astonishing vigor, virility, and energy. His best parts were Rhadames in "Aïda" and Don Jose in "Carmen," though he ventured once into Wagner's musical domain and achieved great success in "Lohengrin." In "Carmen" he reached the maximum of his power. In the scene before the Plaza del Toros, in the last act, he threw himself into the passion of the part with ferocious energy, and made the tragic denouement one of the most thrilling scenes I have ever witnessed on the operatic stage. I know of no personation like it except the elder Salvini's Othello in the scene where he vents his rage upon Iago. The part was admirably adapted to him physically, musically, and

dramatically. In all parts requiring the display of brutal passion he had few equals. Campanini also did some festival work, but when he sang in oratorio numbers or concerted pieces he was not always satisfactory, for he lacked self-control and subordination, and sometimes dominated the situation at the expense of the other singers by singing at the audience in the most stentorian manner. Theodore Thomas, under whose baton he sung at times, vigorously remonstrated with him once about this habit. Campanini asserted himself in his imperious way, but Thomas was not a man to be swerved from his purposes when in his own field. I was witness of one of these encounters, at the close of which Campanini had to yield, but he was honest enough to acknowledge to me afterwards that Thomas was right.

Campanini was a good-hearted man. His worst failings were personal vanity, a furious temper, and impatience under correction. He was also of a jealous disposition, and this jealousy manifested itself once in a ludicrous manner. He had had some unpleasantness with Capoul, who was as vain as a peacock, and especially vain of his accomplishments as a tenor lover on the stage, particularly in "Faust." Upon one occasion, when Capoul had secured the admiring attention of the audience by his realistic love-making in the garden scene of that opera, Campanini, in the stage box, conducted himself in such a manner as to make himself the centre of attraction and spoil the effect of the scene. Capoul declared after that he would never sing if Campanini were allowed to be present, and

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ITALO CAMPANINI

THEODORE WACHTEL
In "Il Trovatore"

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Campanini declared he would not sing if he were not permitted to be in the house at any and all times. The jealousy between the two was all the sillier because no comparison between the two men as tenors was possible. Upon another occasion Campanini had an encounter with Mapleson, Senior, in which he worsted the doughty Colonel, — a feat not often performed. He appeared one morning at rehearsal with four trumpeters, who were to produce a certain effect which the conductor did not favor. When in good form, Campanini could hold his own even with four trumpets. Mapleson at once took his conductor's part and said to Campanini, —

"Why are you interfering here? I am the manager."

Campanini replied, "Well, I am first tenor here."

Mapleson then said, "You were not called to rehearsal anyway. What business have you to be here?"

To this Campanini answered, "I know my business better than you do yours"; and evidently he did, for the four trumpeters played that evening and Campanini had his shout.

I heard Mario twice only. It was in 1872, not long after Chicago's great fire, and he sang in churches, which were the only concert-rooms available at the time, with Carlotta Patti, Annie Louise Cary, Carreno, Sauret, and Scolari, the basso. He had only the ghost of a voice left, but he retained his method in all its beauty and perfection. His voice was really in hopeless ruin, but his singing showed still the fine school of the old days.

It was mournfully suggestive of the great Mario of the past, —

"Mario can soothe with a tenor note
The soul from purgatory,"

but perhaps it was an object-lesson to some tenors who thought they knew how to sing.

Theodor Wachtel, a tenor who could tear passion into tatters, was the son of a German stable-keeper, and in his youth drove cabs for his father. The significance of his occupation will be apparent later on. He was the most robust of robust tenors, and his capacity for shouting was seemingly unlimited. He could even shout down a chorus, and that is no ordinary feat. He always carried his high C with him, and would exhibit it several times of an evening without displaying a sign of vocal fatigue. But at last he met his Waterloo in Chicago. He appeared at the Globe Theatre, supported by Lichtmay, Canissa, DeGebele, Hermanns, Vierling, Franosch, and others, in February, 1872. That was the first musical event of any importance after the Great Fire. The operas announced were "Martha," "Huguenots," "Trovatore," and "The Postilion of Lonjumeau." The manager's announcement of the season is such a curiosity of bombast that I give it entire.

"WACHTEL, WACHTEL, WACHTEL!

"THE GREAT, THE MAGNETIC TENOR!!

"The famous German tenor whose phenomenal and magnificent voice flows like the Rhine itself, turbulent, restless, through all the storied tracts of music. A magnificent fountain, meant, as the poet has intimated, to flow on forever. The princely haste of a lyric monarch commissioned to sound

his natural gifts to all the world and with only one lifetime to accomplish his purpose." *

But I must return to Wachtel. His crowning triumph was in "The Postilion of Lonjumeau," and his crowning number was the rondo, or Postilion's Song. He shouted his high notes in the manner of one hailing a deaf cabby, and the whip-snapping accompaniment was delivered with the skill of an expert Jehu. The pace told upon him at last. After ten years of the operatic cab business his throat gave out. "Martha" and "The Huguenots" were cancelled. The doctor gave him a laryngitis certificate and told him a change of climate would be necessary for his recovery. Thus ended the first "after the fire" operatic season. With all his bluster and pomposity he had a fine vein of sentiment. Shortly after this time he resumed singing, and one evening a telegram was brought to him between acts, announcing the death of his son. He

* The above is certainly literary gorgeousness. It was a time, however, of advertising efflorescence, and managers competed with each other in the verbal display of their attractions. Just before the fire the Swiss Bell Ringers were announced as

THE CAMPANALOGIANS.

MARVELLOUS HETEROGENICONSOLIDATOIRE, RECEIVED EVERYWHERE BY INTELLIGENT AUDIENCES, SANCTIONED BY THE CLERGY, INDORSED BY THE PRESS AND PEOPLE.

On the same day the billboards bore the following emblazonment:

SPALDING, ROGERS, AND HANLON'S CIRCUS.

WITH AEROPALITIC MIRACLES, SAMPILGERROSTRATION, L'ECHILLE PERILEUSE, AND THE QUADRUPLE ANABATHRON PERFORMED BY A QUARTETTE OF ACROBATIC BRAVES, WITH ENLIVENING INTERLUDES TO RELIEVE HIGHLY WROUGHT SENSIBILITIES.

finished the opera, and at the end of the last act interpolated the song, "Gute Nacht, mein herzliches Kind" (Good night, my dearest child).

Charles R. Adams, the American tenor, was in Chicago during the late fifties, both in opera and oratorio. He was the most accomplished native tenor of his time, and had not merely a very powerful voice, but a very sweet one and one of great range. He sang with dramatic expression and a peculiarly refined and artistic finish. His Tannhäuser and Lohengrin had made him a famous reputation both in this country and in Europe, and the oratorio performances given by the Chicago Musical Union, with Christine Nilsson and himself as soloists, were events to be remembered. I believe he ended his career as a teacher in Boston. Like some of our American composers, Dudley Buck and Professor Paine, for instance, Adams was better known in Germany than in his own country.

I have space to mention only a few more tenors, among them Irfre, who sang as if inspired in the Lucia sextet*; Lotti, a German tenor di grazia, whose singing of "Meinen Engel! nenn' Ich mein," was transporting; Alvary, whose Siegfried was the ideal of immortal youth; Candidus, the big German tenor, whom I first met at a New York Arion and Chicago Germania Männerchor Commerz, and whose voice was as big and fine as himself; Capoul, whom Campanini did not love and

* Theodore Thomas held that the "Lucia" sextet and the "Rigoletto" quartet were the inspirations of Italian opera.

whom the women adored, a dapper little French tenor, graduated from the Opera Comique; Habelman, handsome and sweet-voiced, a good, all-round musician and capital actor, whose Fra Diavolo was one of the most dashing and picturesque figures on the stage; and De Lucia. Can any one forget the ring of De Lucia's piercing voice and the intensity of simulated passion with which he delivered the last despairing outcry of Canio, in "Pagliacci" ("La commedia è finita")?

For reasons already stated I can only briefly allude to the great bassos of memory. One of the earliest was Colletti, whose relation to the stage was much like that of Mademoiselle Burmeister. No operatic performance in those days was quite complete without him, for he was not only always ready for his own parts, but, when necessary, for the parts of the other bassos also. Amodio and Bellini must be coupled together. They were large men, with large voices and a large style, who made the rafters of the old wigwam in which Abraham Lincoln was first nominated ring with their sonority when they sang the "Liberty Duet" ("Suoni la tromba"), from "Puritani." Susini and Junca, among the older bassos, were accomplished, faithful artists, making no complaints, like all the rest of those big bass fellows, when people did not appreciate them and prima donnas and tenors carried off all the applause. Castelmary visited Chicago once only. He also was an accomplished singer, and his Mephistopheles in "Faust" a most artistic performance. It may be remembered that, like Remenyi, he died upon the stage, at the close of a

performance, in 1897. Another famous Mephistopheles was the big, huge-voiced Hermanns. His action of the part was fine, but his make-up was hideous enough to have frozen Marguerite stiff at first sight. But this Teutonic giant can never be disassociated in my memory from his Beppo, the bandit, in "Fra Diavolo," and the song, "I 'm afloat," which he once interpolated in the third act, and which he delivered with stentorian voice in this style:

"I 'm a bloat, I 'm a bloat
On der dark rolling tide;
The ocean 's mein home
And mein park is my pride."

Carl Formes brought the biggest and most impressive bass from Germany that ever passed through the American Musical custom house. I first heard him in concert in Chicago (1857), the year of his arrival in the United States, but I remember only one number in that programme, Schubert's "Wanderer." His singing of this impressive Lied was so majestic in manner, and withal so tender, for a voice that resembled an organ tone in depth, strength, and sonority, that one could hardly remember anything else. He was then in his prime. He had a strong, leonine face, high forehead, long wavy black hair, and an Apollo Belvidere throat and chest. He was built on a massive scale and his voice corresponded, for he surpassed all his contemporaries as a basso profundo. He visited Chicago often and lived here for a time. His great operatic roles were Malvolio in "Stradella"; Plunket in "Martha"; Falstaff in "The Merry Wives of

CARL FORMES

MYRON W. WHITNEY

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Windsor"; Sarastro in "The Magic Flute"; Marcel in "The Huguenots"; Rocco in "Fidelio"; Bertram in "Robert the Devil"; and Leporello in "Don Giovanni." He was a versatile singer, equally at home in Plunket's rollicking drinking song, or the impressive "Isis and Osiris" and "In diesen heilgen Hallen" from "The Magic Flute." His Leporello and Rocco always seemed to me his most finished performances. His conception of the former was quite original, for, unlike most singers in that part, he did not make him a clown, but a fitting attendant for his reckless master. In 1889, when a very old man, he sang in opera in San Francisco and died in the same year. He used to say that preservation of his voice was due "to God's grace and the Italian method."

Myron D. Whitney, the best of American bassos, is still living, in the enjoyment of his *otium cum dignitate* and the memories of a long career of uninterrupted popular admiration and vocal success. He sang for a few seasons in opera most acceptably and was for a time with the America Opera Troupe, but his crowning achievements were in oratorio and festivals. He made his first oratorio success in Birmingham and Oxford, England, where the test was a severe one, for the English are an oratorio-loving people, and most of the traditions centre about Birmingham. He had a smooth, rich, resonant bass, admirably schooled, and delivered with refinement, dignity, and classical repose. As an oratorio singer, indeed, he had no equal in his

time, and his superior has not yet been found. He is the soul of geniality and has a quiet humor that makes him a most delightful companion. He has always been universally beloved on and off the stage, and respected and honored as few singers have been.

CHAPTER XI

ENGLISH OPERA

THE PYNE-HARRISON TROUPE — CAROLINE RICHINGS — HER INDUSTRY AND VARIOUS VENTURES — THE OLD QUARTETTE — ZELDA SEGUIN, CASTLE, AND CAMPBELL — HENRI DRAYTON — THE SCARED CAT — PAREPA — HER ANCESTRY — DIFFICULTIES OF AVOIRDUPOIS — BOUTS WITH THE CLERGY — HER MARRIAGE — MADAME RUDERSDORF'S TRIBUTE — THE BOSTONIANS — JESSIE BARTLETT DAVIS — THE "PINAFORE" FEVER

THE advance detachment of English opera in Chicago was the Pyne-Harrison troupe. It came to this country from England in 1855, and Louisa Pyne was its leading figure. She was somewhat short in stature, blond haired and blue eyed, with an unusually pleasing and expressive face, and a stage presence which was the ideal of courtesy and dignity. She had been very successful in England and was a great favorite of Queen Victoria, who pensioned her when she retired. She was a most accomplished musician and had a remarkably sweet and fluent voice as well as an engaging manner of singing. She came to Chicago in 1856, but did not appear in opera. She brought with her her sister Susan, Harrison, tenor, Horncastle, basso, Borrani, barytone, and Reif, pianist, and they gave concerts. In this connection memory recalls Tom Whiffen, whose

wife was niece of the Pynes, though neither was a member of the troupe. Whiffen came to the United States in 1868 and appeared as a singer in the Galton troupe, but subsequently rose to distinction as an actor. He was one of the few men whom it is a privilege to know — a genial, refined scholar and gentleman, an ardent lover of books, and a companion of the best actors, singers, and bookmen of his time. I met him in Chicago, when he came here in a "Pinafore" company, and he strongly reminded me of Thackeray's George Warrington.

In 1858 Chicago was introduced to English opera with a performance of the "Crown Diamonds," by the Durand troupe, which comprised Rosalie Durand, Misses King and Hodson, and Messrs. Arnold, Trevor, and Lyster. This troupe was followed by another headed by Lucy Estcott, a charming little singer; but financial difficulties overtook her, and the season was cut short. Next came a still stronger troupe in 1859 (Cooper's), with Annie Milner, Rudolphsen, Aynesley Cook, and Brookhouse Bowler, as principals. After giving Chicago "The Creation," the Metropolitan Hall * stage was arranged for operatic performances, and although the stage settings were crude and its area circumscribed, "The Elixir of Love," "Trovatore," "The Barber of Seville," "Norma," "Sonnambula," and "The Daughter of the Regiment" were given very creditably. Chicago listened to opera in those days at fifty cents a seat and no charge for reserving. Why, it was worth

* Metropolitan Hall was on the northwest corner of Lasalle and Randolph streets.

that just to hear Bowler sing the "Fair Land of Poland" in "The Bohemian Girl"! He had a ringing tenor voice, and plenty of force and fire behind it to make the martial strains thrill you. He had a prodigious memory. His favorite way of learning his part was not by attending tedious rehearsals and punishing a piano, but by whistling it through in an evening.

English opera, however, did not get a firm foothold until Caroline Richings appeared upon the scene. She was the smartest, brightest, hardest working artist of them all. It is usually believed that she was an American and a daughter of Peter Richings, the actor. On the contrary, she was born in England, and her father's name was Reynoldson. After her father's death Richings gave her a musical education, adopted her, and brought her to this country. She made her debut as a pianist in 1847 at a Philadelphia Philharmonic concert; as a singer with the Seguin troupe in 1852; and as a comedienne in 1853 in "The Prima Donna," in which she had a singing part. She first appeared in Chicago with her "father" in 1854, at Rice's Theatre, as a pianist and singer, and made a great success in "The Daughter of the Regiment." In 1855 she had a benefit at the same theatre, at which she appeared in Bishop's "Clara, Maid of Milan," also in an after piece, "Court Favors," at the close of which an allegorical tableau, "Valley Forge," was presented, with old Peter as Washington, and Caroline as the Genius of Liberty, singing "The Star-Spangled Banner."

I think it was in 1866 that this brave little woman started out with a troupe of her own, determined to

develop the possibilities of English opera, and succeeded, with the help of the best troupe ever organized, in carrying out her purpose. To mention the names of the best English quartette singers ever heard here — Caroline Richings, Zelda Harrison, William Castle, and "Sher" Campbell — recalls only pleasant nights of musical enjoyment. Zelda Harrison, who subsequently married Seguin, the artist, was one of the most delightful of singers and a charming actress, especially as Nancy in "Martha," Cherubino in "The Marriage of Figaro," as well as in the serious parts of Urbain in "The Huguenots," Azucena in "Trovatore," and Adalgisa in "Norma." William Castle, a handsome, dashing tenor, was a universal favorite. He was an excellent actor, and had a smooth, rich, velvety voice, that lent itself admirably to melodious roles. "Sher" Campbell was the basso of the quartette. In 1864, previous to the appearance of the Richings' troupe, I think Campbell and Castle organized a troupe with Rosa Cooke as prima donna, and that the tour was abandoned in the Spring of 1865. As the story goes, on the morning of April 15, while in a Southern Illinois town, Castle was aroused by a knock at his bedroom door, and the hotel landlord shouting in a loud tone, "Say, you git up and git out of here as quick as you can; one of you damned actors killed the President last night, and it ain't safe for any of your kind of folks around here, so you had better git." And they got. Campbell was originally a Connecticut carriage trimmer, but went on the minstrel stage upon the advice of Jerry Bryant. A few years later he sang in opera and

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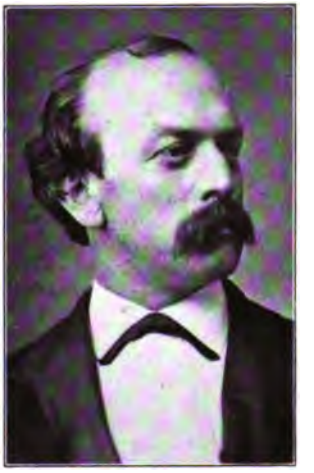

CAROLINE RICHINGS
WILLIAM CASTLE

ZELDA SEGUIN
S. C. CAMPBELL

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became a favorite. He was not a remarkable actor, but he sang with much feeling and expression, and was at his best in such songs as "The Heart bowed down" in "The Bohemian Girl," and "The Di Provenza" in "Traviata." When Count Arnheim observes Arline's picture and gives expression to his grief in his well-known reverie, or Germont appeals to his son with memories of the Provence home, the audience were always deeply impressed. And how we all thought that the "Good Night" in "Martha" would never be sung so well by any other four! Certainly there were never four voices better adapted to each other.

In 1870 a combination of the Richings and Parepa troupes, with the exception of Parepa herself, was effected. The new organization included Caroline Richings, Rose Hersee, Emma Howson, Zelda Seguin, Annie Kemp Bowler, Annie Starbird, William Castle, Brookhouse Bowler, John Chatterson, Alberto Laurence, S. C. Campbell, Henri Drayton, Arthur Howell, Mrs. Drayton, Fannie Goodwin, Amati Dubreul, and S. Behrens, conductor. It was one of the strongest ever made for English opera. This troupe gave twenty-one different operas in eighteen consecutive nights and three matinees, without a variation from the original announcements. That shows how opera was given in the old days. The name of Henri Drayton appears in the above list. He had a varied and picturesque career. He was born in Philadelphia and educated as a topographical engineer. He abandoned that profession, however, because of his love of music, went to Paris, and was the first American student at

the Conservatoire, and also the favorite pupil of Lablache. During the Revolution he sang the "Marseillaise" on the barricades. Then he went to England, where he became a great favorite. He returned to this country in 1859 with his wife, and they gave "parlor operas" which he wrote or adapted. He was a courtly gentleman, a scholar of ability, the author of many plays and operettas, and a singer of superb power and expression. He died in 1872. His Rip Van Winkle in Bristow's opera of that name and his Devilshoof in "The Bohemian Girl" were capital pieces of acting, but Marcel in "The Huguenots" always seemed to me his best role. He was the physical ideal of the old Huguenot soldier. He told me a funny incident in his experience at one time in the denouement of this opera. He was forced to laugh in the death scene when the stage cat, frightened by something, ran across the stage and leaped into a box, frightening a lady so that she screamed and dropped her opera glass upon the bald pate of the trombone player, who jumped up with a howl and created a panic of consternation among the violinists. Order at last was restored, and Marcel went on dying in quiet convulsions of laughter.

In 1873 Richings, who at this time was Mrs. Bernard, having married one of her tenors, took a position in Miss Kellogg's opera troupe and sang one season. During 1874 she headed an Old Folks' concert troupe. This was disbanded in 1875, and she then organized a troupe to give concerts and light operas, which met with varying success for three or four

years. She was still engaged in perfecting future operatic plans when she died in 1882. There never was a harder working woman on the stage than Caroline Richings. She could sing every night in the week, month in and month out, and appear upon the stage every night as fresh as if she were just back from a vacation. I was witness once to the following incident. I was talking with her about her repertory for the coming week, when one of the chorus women came up, apologized for the interruption, and asked to be excused that evening, as she was not "feeling very well."

"Not feeling very well," said Richings. "It is your business to feel well all the time. Why, Elizabeth, I had the measles once for two weeks and sang every night, though I didn't feel very well, and I didn't give them to anybody either. Brace up! You will feel a great deal better if you come to-night. I really can't excuse you."

To this faithful, honest, hard worker belongs the credit of having placed English opera upon a sound footing.

There are few artists I recall more pleasantly, few who have more completely identified themselves with their art, than Parepa. Her unvarying good nature and big-heartedness somehow blended most happily with her rich, flexible, and almost inexhaustible voice. She was big in every way, — mentally, morally, and physically, — and acquaintance with her off the stage compelled an admiration of her personally as well as

vocally. It would be difficult to assign her real descent. Her maternal grandfather was a Welshman. Her paternal grandmother was the daughter of a Turkish Grand Vizier. Her father was a Wallachian nobleman, Baron Georgiades de Boyesku of Bucharest; her mother, Elizabeth Seguin, sister of the famous English basso; and she herself was born in Scotland. I may add that her first husband was an Englishman, and her second, a German. She made her debut as a mere girl in 1855 at Malta, and her English debut in 1857. After remaining in London until 1865, she came to this country for a concert tour under the management of H. L. Bateman. She first appeared in Chicago, October 23, 1865, in concert, supported by Levy, the whirlwind polka cornetist, and Carl Rosa, the violinist, with Carl Anschutz leader. She introduced herself with the "Casta Diva," "Nightingale's Trill," "Il Bacio," and "Five o'clock in the morning." She made many visits here — in 1866, with Mills the pianist, Fortuna the barytone, Ferranti, and Brignoli; in 1868, with Bowler, Ferranti, Rosa, and Levy; in 1869, in "The Creation," assisted by Nordblom, tenor, and Rudolphsen, basso; and in 1869–1870, with her English opera troupe in a season memorable for the first hearing of "Oberon," "The Puritan's Daughter," "The Black Domino," and "The Marriage of Figaro" in English. The season was also memorable for Chicago's first acquaintance with the charming little Rose Hersee, a fascinating singer and refined and elegant actress. In connection with the first performance of "The Marriage of Figaro," the audience was treated to a revised version of the libretto. It

will be remembered that in the conspiracy to punish the Count, Susanna contrives a rendezvous with him in the garden, and arranges with the Countess that she shall disguise herself as the maid, the latter assuming the identity of the Countess. But at this point an awkward situation arose. As Parepa was very stout and Hersee was very slender, the scene would have been so ludicrous as to spoil the effect. Parepa and Carl Rosa called me into their council, and at last the problem was solved by the addition of a few lines, introduced as spoken parts, which humorously explained the situation and forestalled the inconsistency by preparing the audience for it. The difficulty was satisfactorily bridged over, and few in the audience probably suspected the text had been tampered with. It was at first contemplated to introduce the interpolation in recitative, but Carl Rosa firmly declined to attempt a Mozartean accompaniment.

Parepa had a remarkably pure and melodious soprano voice, which had been so carefully trained that it was free from all exaggeration, or vices of any kind, and was enjoyable in every detail of execution as well as in all styles of music, — opera, oratorio, or ballad. She was most unassuming in manner and always refined in her work. A coarse note or a coarse bit of expression never escaped from her. She was a well-educated woman, and had gifts of language as well as of voice, for she spoke English, Italian, French, German, and Spanish fluently. She was also sincerely religious and a member of the Church of England, and yet more than once she was attacked by some of the over zealous

clergymen. She had several tilts with them, for she always resented attacks upon members of her profession. Once in a Western town, where she was to open an opera house, an opposition religious service was held, and the following rather crude poem was printed and circulated:

Is that garment e'er woven
  Of pleasures of earth,
Of scenes of the theatre,
  Or in halls of mirth?
No, no, that endless concert
  Of artists whose fame
Time's trumps are even too base
  To utter their names,
Whose sweet songs and whose singing
  Far richer shall be
Than Parepas e'er sing
  With their best melody.

On the second night of the engagement Philip Phillips, "the Sweet Singer," was pitted against her, but Parepa managed to hold her own, and she went away leaving the villagers none the worse from hearing her. She had an experience also with a minister in Chicago, who had assailed the opera as well as herself, and sent me a letter for publication, in which she vigorously defended the singers. I regret I cannot print it here. It was deftly abstracted from my autograph collection by a clergyman who was an autograph fiend, and who declined to return it to me. It goes to show the demoralizing effect of the collecting habit, even upon clergymen.

Though Parepa, as I have said, was very stout, she

EUPHROSYNE PAREPA-ROSA

CARL ROSA

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never allowed her avoirdupois to interfere with her performances and always accepted the embarrassing situation with the utmost good nature. She did not hesitate to personate Arline in the "Bohemian Girl," for instance, "delicate daughter of royal birth," though at times she had to smile at the incongruity. When Arditi, who had written a waltz song for her, complained that she did not care for him, for she seldom sang his song, she laughingly replied: "Dear maestro, think of the words, 'Io so volar!' and then look at me! Do I look as if I could fly?"

There have been many absurd stories about Parepa's marriage to Carl Rosa, her second husband.* A report was circulated and generally credited that she was so infatuated with Brignoli, and so jealous of his attentions to other ladies, that she deliberately proposed to Carl Rosa, who was a small man and her junior, and married him. I think I have a more authoritative explanation. She was once asked how she came to marry such a little man. She replied, "Would you really like to know? Why! because he asked me." Parepa told me of this conversation, and added, "How could I help it? Carl is so little, and I pitied him so." Carl Rosa may have been small in stature, but he was big in spirit. After their marriage, which was a very happy one, she had to accept his interpretations of music whether she agreed with him or not. Once, when she came late to rehearsal, he stopped the singing and rebuked her before the company, saying: "Euphrosyne, this is a very

* Parepa's first husband was Captain De Wolfe, an English gentleman, who died in 1865.

bad example for you to set the ladies and gentlemen of the company. You must not do it again." And she did not.

Parepa died in London in 1874. No finer tribute was paid to her than that by Madame Rudersdorf, Richard Mansfield's mother, who wrote:

"A woman of the highest culture, endowed with innumerable talents; a pure-minded woman; a sparkling, clever companion; a true friend; a most loving and devoted wife; a very woman longing for the joys and blessings of motherhood, and dying because fate snatched them away from her."

The Bostonians deserve a place in the memories of English opera. The germ of this old-time popular organization is to be found in the Barnabee concert troupe of 1870, and the development of it in a troupe organized in Boston for the performance of "Pinafore," which included Barnabee, Myron Whitney, Tom Karl, MacDonald, Marie Stone, and Adelaide Phillips. Their success was so great that they ventured to give "The Marriage of Figaro," "Chimes of Normandy," "Trovatore," "The Bohemian Girl," and other operas. As time went on new singers replaced old ones, among them Zelie de Lussan, Jessie Bartlett Davis, Geraldine Ulmar, W. H. Fessenden, and Cowles, the ex-bank clerk, with his ponderous bass. American operas were also added to the repertory, particularly those composed by Reginald DeKoven. The troupe was unique because it was made up exclusively of American singers and was managed by an American woman. The most prominent lady singer in the troupe was Jessie Bartlett Davis, an

Illinois farmer's daughter. In her sixteenth year she joined the Richings company, then in its last season. The next year she came to Chicago and studied here, and also secured a church choir position. In the Winter of 1878 Creswold, the organist, placed her in a company of recruits from several churches in the city to present "Pinafore," in which she made a hit as Little Buttercup. The local concerts of the Chicago Church Choir Pinafore Company proved so successful that it was taken through the country on tour. After her marriage, in 1880, she retired from the stage for two years. In 1882 she joined the Carleton Opera Company, and her success led to her engagement by Mapleson, for grand opera, in which she sang with Adelina Patti in "Faust," "The Huguenots," and "Dinorah." In 1883 she resumed singing in the Sullivan operettas throughout the West. Her next engagement was with the Bostonians, with which organization she was identified for twelve years. After leaving it, she appeared one season in the principal vaudeville theatres of the country, and the next season sang in the "all star" cast of "Erminie," which was her last appearance in a regular singing organization. She died May 14, 1905. Mrs. Davis had a pure contralto voice of good, even range, and her lower notes were unusually rich and full. She displayed great intelligence, both in singing and acting, and in ballad singing she excelled by reason of her vivacious, expressive manner.

The evolution of popular entertainment during the past fifty years can easily be traced from the legitimate

drama, concert, oratorio, and opera, to spectacular exhibitions, opera bouffe, operettas of the "Pinafore" class, light operas, and from these to musical comedies introduced by "Florodora" and rag-time by "Bedelia," and to the problem, Wild West, and creepy dramas of despair. In all this evolution nothing ever equalled the success of the Gilbert-Sullivan operettas, particularly "Pinafore." It was not only a success, but a frenzy. Captain Corcoran and his jolly crew, not forgetting "his sisters and his cousins whom he reckons by the dozens," drove everything else out of the field and enthralled and engrossed the public mind. The fever broke out about 1879 and raged fiercely during that year. It lasted four or five years, gradually abated in violence, and disappeared about 1885. But for once this popular frenzy had some justification, for this series of operettas was clean, bright, wholesome, witty, and masterly for light music.

A brief statement will serve to show how the fever raged in Chicago. "Pinafore" was first given here January 27, 1879. Digby Bell was Sir Joseph; P. J. J. Cooper, Captain Corcoran; A. H. Thompson, Ralph Rackstraw; John Benitz, Dick Deadeye; Mattie Lancaster, Josephine; and Flora E. Barry, Little Buttercup. Two amateur troupes likewise, the Duff and Pauline Markham companies, performed it in February. The Standard Theatre Company of New York gave it in May, with a strong cast, including Tom Whiffen (everybody liked him so that he was universally called "Tom"), Hart Conway, Alonzo Hatch, William Davidge, Marie Stone, and Blanche Galton, and in the

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"The Three Little Maids from School" in "The Mikado"

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same month it was performed by the Mendelssohn Club of Hyde Park and the Madrigal Opera Company. In June the Chicago Church Choir Company began its remarkable series of representations. The original cast was as follows: Sir Joseph, Frank Bowen; Captain Corcoran, John S. McWade; Ralph, Charles A. Knorr; Dick Deadeye, L. W. Raymond; Boatswain, Charles F. Noble; Josephine, Mrs. Louis Falk; Buttercup, Jessie Bartlett; Hebe, Mrs. E. S. Tilton. In the same month the Gilmore Juvenile Company, composed of children, performed it. In July it was given in German. In October the company which afterwards developed into the Bostonians came. The cast included such well-known artists as Barnabee, Myron D. Whitney, Tom Karl, Miss McCulloch, Mrs. May Beebe, and Georgie Cayvan. Two juvenile troupes, the Haverly and the Burton Stanley, also gave it. In 1880 the performances of "Pinafore" fell off some, for others of the Sullivan operettas were brought forward; but the D'Oyley Carte troupe gave it several times. In 1881 it declined still more rapidly. "Patience," "The Pirates of Penzance," and "The Mikado" were taking its place, but it was given a few times that year by the Boston Ideals and by one or two minor troupes. In 1882 and 1883 it was performed in Chicago only by the Church Choir Company, which had returned from its wanderings, much to the delight of their respective congregations. It was given once or twice in 1884 by a company organized by John Stetson, and I think the fever disappeared in 1885, though even now a sporadic case appears at times.

How it raged in 1879! Not less than thirty troupes were in the field at one time, all making money. It was given by all the large city church choirs, German and French troupes, negro troupes, children's troupes, opera bouffe companies, and scratch troupes of the most heterogeneous kinds. It was travestied on the minstrel stage and thinned the ranks of the regular theatre players. Think of the jolly company that "sailed the ocean blue" in H. M. S. Pinafore! There were Geraldine Ulmar, Lilly Post, Emma Abbott, Julia Marlowe, Annie Russell, Maude Adams, Mrs. Ezra Kendall, Jessie Bartlett, Adelaide Phillips, Marie Stone, Blanche Galton, the fascinating Jarbeau (some of these ladies were only children then), Digby Bell, Raymond Hitchcock, Frank Deshon, Henry Woodruff, Arthur Dunn, Frank Daniels, Myron D. Whitney, Tom Whiffen, Hart Conway, Alonzo Hatch, William Davidge, and Richard Mansfield, — even Richard Mansfield, who sang the admiral's role in London for fifteen dollars a week, when he was nigh starvation, only to be told by his manager, "Great heavens, man! You will never act as long as you live!" But somehow he did, and how well he did it, and how hard he fought for it, and how stubbornly he held on until he reached the top, and how he was vilified! The "Pinafore" fever was a healthy one. It is a pity we cannot have another like it. The charming little nautical sketch holds an honorable place in the records of English opera. Its wit is always delicate if its satire is always keen. That its words and music should fit each other so perfectly is all the more remarkable when its dual authorship is considered. It

is a sad and misanthropic soul that does not now and then long to hear Dick Deadeye sing of "The Merry Maiden and the Tar" or Sir Joseph boast the sovereignty of the sea with the cheery refrain of his long and assorted retinue of kindred.

CHAPTER XII

OPERA BOUFFE

FIRST PERFORMANCES IN CHICAGO — LAMBELÉ, TOSTÉE, AND AIMÉE — EMILY SOLDENE AND THE GALTONS — SOLDENE'S LITERARY ABILITY — LYDIA THOMPSON AND THE "BRITISH BLONDES" — HER WAR WITH THE NEWSPAPERS — HER ASSAULT UPON AN EDITOR — THE TABLES TURNED — OFFENBACH'S MUSIC

OPERA bouffe was imported from France in the late sixties, and though but little known to the present generation, met with extraordinary success for nearly twenty years, particularly in the case of the really brilliant contributions which Offenbach made to its catalogue. It was in the palmy days of the Crosby Opera House, April 13, 1868, that Chicago heard its first opera bouffe. The troupe was headed by Aline Lambelé, a dainty little soubrette, with all the pretty little ways, graceful movements, and fetching costumes of the Frenchwoman, and presented the three most attractive Offenbach operas, "La Grande Duchesse," "La Belle Hélène," and "Orpheus aux Enfers." They were something entirely novel. For the drollness of its story, the originality of its characters as well as of its music, its obstreperous gayety, dash, and geniality, mixed with occasional seriousness and romantic sentiment, "La Grande Duchesse" was unique. In "La Belle Hélène," the heroes of the time

of Paris and Helen of Troy were presented in modern burlesque. In "Orpheus" the Olympian gods and goddesses were introduced, with human attributes, and as symbols of worldly departments of action and official life. In a word, they were twentieth-century caricatures of the whole Olympian coterie. It is rare that anything more humorous is presented on the stage than the procession of the pagan divinities headed by a brass band, each walking in regular military fashion, carriages conveying the old, infirm, and worn-out gods bringing up the rear. The success of these operas was sufficiently pronounced to tempt other troupes to cross the water. Tostée, the riskiest and most reckless of the Paris opera bouffe actresses, came in September of that year. She dressed alluringly, glittered with jewels, contorted vulgarly, sang as raucously as a raven, and skated over very thin ice. The next season brought Rose Bell and Desclauzas, who introduced "Barbe Bleue" and "Geneviève de Brabant," with its fine duet of the gendarmes, and the suggestive "La Vie Parisienne," "Fleur de Thé," and "L'Œil Crève," which were coarse of story but alluring of music. The Susan Galton troupe came in the same year. It was a little company of admirable singers and actors, all the principals being related to Louisa Pyne. They were trained in the best school of English opera, and produced the Offenbach operettas, which are as bright as newly minted dimes, among them "Sixty-six," "Litzchen and Fritzschen," "Marriage by Lanterns," "Ching Chow Hi," and "Robinson Crusoe." Alice Oates frisked about like a kitten from 1871 to 1875. She

was little, but very alert and very much alive, a fair singer and good all-round actress, who usually monopolized about nine-tenths of the stage business. In 1875 came a troupe headed by Emily Soldene, one of the few opera bouffe and comic opera people who could sing. She had sung in grand opera, but for some reason left it for the lighter work. She was also an excellent actress, and if any one doubts she was at home with the pen, they should read her charming "Recollections." * Aimée, the best of them all, a fairly good singer, and more refined in her action than many of the others, came in 1872, and was such a favorite that she appeared every season during the next ten years. Paolo-Marié in 1880, Marie Geistinger in 1882, Théo in 1884, and Judic in 1885, were her successors. It cannot be said that any of these frisky revellers, who were mostly French, contributed anything of consequence to high art. Soldene and Geistinger were the only real singers among them, and Aimée the only one with much refinement; there were times when even Aimée's eyes were very wicked and her dancing feverish, but she was never so coarse as the most of them.

* I cannot help copying the following passage from Soldene's "Recollections," particularly as the book is now difficult to find: "Back to the days, the joyous days of first-heard music, when the winds to each separate tree sang a different tune; back to the veritable distractions that fell upon the ardent but stumbling student of five lines and four spaces, the impatient inquirer into the mysteries of 'do-re-mi-fa'; back to the memories of mighty artists, to the memories of the grand opera, memories that, impalpable and gauze-like, elude one and get mixed up with the gay and festive music hall; back, way back, back to the days when Plancus was consul, when we were all young; back to the birth of that gilded, glittering, tinselled glory, the opera bouffe stage. Ah! the days when we went gipsying, a long time ago!"

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Not one of these, however, created so great a sensation in Chicago so the handsome, graceful Lydia Thompson, who came here in 1869 with her "British Blondes," among them Eliza Wethersby and Pauline Markham, who so bewitched Richard Grant White with her "vocal velvet." They opened a three weeks' season at the Crosby Opera House, with "Sinbad the Sailor," Lydia, of course, being the sailor, as boy parts were her specialty. The display of personal charms exceeded that in "The Black Crook," "White Fawn," and other spectacles, but it was modest as compared with the displays in some of the musical comedies of the present day. The papers criticised it as indecent, and the ministers denounced the "Blondes"; but at last they departed and the storm died away. Lydia, however, returned in 1870 with the same people, and was even more risky in stage costumes and saucy in her personal interpolations than before. The storm broke out anew. The "Blondes" became the talk of the town. The papers scolded and the pulpit thundered, and with each fresh assault the "Blondes" grew more audacious, and Lydia, who was the storm centre, more furious and satirical in her allusions. The "Chicago Times" was the most bitter in its attacks, and Lydia not only stopped advertising in its columns, but publicly posted its editor, Wilbur F. Story, who had a national reputation for personal criticism, as "a liar and coward." This kind of advertising exactly suited Story, who had become accustomed to even worse epithets than these. The "Times" kept up the merry war, which culminated February 24, 1870. On that morning it published a furious attack upon

the "Blondes" in general, and made suggestive comments upon Lydia in particular, which she construed as aspersions upon her character. She called a council of war at once, and proposed personal chastisement of the critic of the "Times." Her attorney said he could not defend her in such case, as Mr. Story, editor of the "Times," was responsible for what appeared in its columns, not its critic. The council broke up with the decision to punish Mr. Story on the street. A carriage was ordered, and Lydia and Pauline Markham, with the manager and press-agent, were driven south on Wabash Avenue, where they were sure to meet Mr. Story on his way to the office. They encountered him near Peck Court, walking slowly along with Mrs. Story. Notwithstanding the latter's presence, the four alighted. Lydia rushed at him and struck him two or three times with a rawhide. When Mr. Story tried to defend himself, he was prevented by the manager and press agent, but a policeman near by quelled the disturbance and arrested the two women. They were taken before Justice Banyon, who imposed a nominal fine for disorderly conduct. Banyon was not a great jurist, and he may have been lenient because he was an Englishman, or he may have been dazed by the pretty blondes. It must be placed to Banyon's credit, however, that he was an accomplished restaurateur. He was a connoisseur of English mutton-chops and had no equal at that time as a constructor of Welsh rarebits. What he didn't know about such things wasn't worth knowing. And what he knew about law was hardly worth knowing, either.

But Banyon's after-the-theatre rarebits have never been excelled in Chicago.

The "Blondes" returned in 1871 somewhat chastened, and produced "Lurline." The "Times" ignored her, and she accordingly was not so aggressive as before. She caused but one sensation that season, which turned the tables, for a crazy woman, one Ella Griffin, who had been following her about, trying to make her acquaintance, assaulted her on the street. The unhappy lunatic was arrested and sent to an asylum. In 1872 Lydia appeared again in "Lurline," "Ixion," "Sinbad," and "The Forty Thieves," with Edouin's "moral ballet" from Paris. I ventured to interview her as to the ethical qualities claimed for this ballet. The little woman furiously disclaimed any personal moral awakening and denounced her critics as "Puritan prudes." As they did n't like a moral English ballet, she thought she would bring a moral French one and see how they liked that. I don't think they did, for it had neither morals nor grace. Recalling those days, the protests of press, pulpit, and public seem curious now, for the most daring audacities of these "British Blondes," and of the moral Paris ballet as well, were tame as compared with those displayed in the musical comedies of to-day. "Other times, other customs."

Opera bouffe in its short life was merry and gay, and sometimes reckless in its methods, sometimes bold and bad. It had its little day and fizzed out, and the smoke it left was not very pleasant. And so it will probably be with the musical comedies. The material out of which they are made is exhausted. It

should be practicable, however, to restore the best of the Offenbach operas, like the "Grand Duchess," "La Belle Hélène," and "Orpheus," and prune them of indelicacies, which would be an easy task. The music certainly is brilliant, characteristic, and even unique, and the text might be made unobjectionable, except to the very prudish, by careful revision and by eliminating the suggestions with which some performers embellish the lines. Offenbach's music is the music of good spirits, bright wit, and wholesome hilarity, infused with grace, elegance, and legitimate musical color and beauty. It is so unique that it seems a pity to lose it. Our playwrights are continually adapting French farces and comedies for the American stage. Why cannot some one do the same for the opera bouffe librettos? The operas were presented here originally just as they were written for French audiences and with that license of speech and coarse suggestiveness of action which do not offend them. They are very showy and attractive, and the music is always enjoyable, but the spirit and motive are French. Might it not be possible to adapt these exotics to American soil and to prepare a book to fit this delightful music without cramming it with indelicacy?

CHAPTER XIII

SOME IMPRESARIOS

HABITS OF THE CLASS — BERNARD ULLMAN AND HIS BAD QUALITIES — MAURICE STRAKOSCH AND HIS GOOD QUALITIES — MAX MARETZEK'S LONG CAREER — JACOB GRAU AND MAURICE GRAU — COMMERCIALISM *vs.* ART — THE ONLY DE VIVO — PHILOSOPHICAL MAX STRAKOSCH — COL. JAMES HENRY MAPLESON "OF HER MAJESTY'S"

THE operatic impresario is quite as interesting and as distinctive in type as the operatic artist. He is rarely if ever gregarious. He dwells apart, and is as unapproachable as the Grand Llama. The general public is familiar with the personalities and performances of prima donnas and makes expensive acquaintance with the haughty minions of the box-office, but it never comes in contact with the impresario. He is usually a very exalted person with a handsome brilliant in his cravat and a wrinkled brow above it. The contract, that little fragile paper which holds him and his troupe together, is often the occasion of the wrinkles, for he spends a large part of his time forestalling the efforts of cunning artists to make holes in it. Maurice Grau once told me that no contract was safe from a prima donna unless it was made of cast iron and put together with copper rivets. He is also the court of last resort, to settle the quarrels of prima

donnas, stage scandals, and complaints of every description. The box-office, which is the barometer of operatic success, is always a source of anxiety to him. He is never certain that his best laid plans will not be spoiled at the last moment by sudden caprice, momentary jealousy, or a sore throat, endorsed by a convenient doctor's certificate, written for the usual consideration minus the expense of a diagnosis. These are some of the reasons why the impresario's brow is usually wrinkled, and why he elects to dwell apart, hard by the Gate of a Hundred Sorrows. He is not often a musician. It would be better if he were, for in that case his people could not take advantage of his ignorance. I once knew a manager who by virtue of a mortgage came into possession of a Chicago theatre and decided to run it himself. He went to the theatre the next morning during rehearsal, and while watching the orchestra, noticed to his great surprise that the trombonist, who had a few bars of rest in his music, was not playing. He instantly ordered the conductor to stop, and asked him why that man was not playing. The conductor replied that he had a rest. The new manager impatiently exclaimed: "Rest! This is no time to rest. Let him rest when he gets through. After this you see that he plays all the time and earns his money. I don't want any sojering in my band." Of course the manager lost prestige at once and was soon willing to have some one else who knew more about the theatre manage for him. The most successful impresarios I have known were more or less acquainted

with music, with one prominent exception, but as a class they are very interesting — some of them, indeed, more interesting than the stage people.

The impresario with whom I first made acquaintance was Bernard Ullman, who brought some of the early concert troupes to Chicago. Of all the impresarios I have known, he was the most pretentious, unreliable, and headstrong. He had no hesitation about inventing the most preposterous romances concerning his artists, and would get furiously indignant when newspapers declined to print them. He was in frequent quarrels with other managers, with his own people, and with the critics. He went with Herz, the pianist, to Mexico, as his agent; and Herz, unable to endure his methods, discharged him. Maurice Strakosch boxed his ears once in Havana. Benedetti cowhided him in Baltimore. The treasurer of the Astor Place Opera House kicked him out of his office because of his insulting manner. Theodore Thomas has told me of his difficulties with him when he conducted opera for him in 1857. In 1852 he wrote a pamphlet, called "Ten Years of Music in the United States," in which he coarsely abused the American people for their admiration of the dollar. One would have supposed from this pamphlet that Ullman had devoted himself to art purely for art's sake, when in reality he had devoted himself to art for the dollar's sake, and was incensed against the people because they had not given him more of their dollars. I met him only once or twice, as he was not a frequent visitor to Chicago, but upon these occasions

he was the most unprepossessing of all the impresarios in his personal manners and unendurable pretensions.

It is pleasant to turn from him to Maurice Strakosch, who was a good musician, an honorable impresario, and a courteous man of the world. I first met him when he was very agreeably engaged in looking after the interests of the young girl, Adelina Patti, afterwards his sister-in-law. He was very proud of her success, as he had been one of her early instructors for a short time. He first came to Chicago in 1860. The troupe, a concert one, was somewhat magnificently advertised as comprising Adelina Patti, "the most famous singer in the world," Amalia Patti, "the most accomplished contralto in the United States," Brignoli, "the greatest tenor in the United States," Ferri, "the most famous barytone in the United States," and Junca, "the finest basso in the United States." As Maurice was not much given to bombastic announcements, the superlatives may have been furnished by his good-natured and optimistic brother, Max, who in his subsequent career as impresario was always confident that every artist he had under contract was the best in the world.

Maurice Strakosch, as I have said, was a well-trained musician. At the beginning of his career he studied vocal music with the intention of fitting himself for the operatic stage, but shortly relinquished that purpose, and devoted himself to the piano with such assiduity that he made a successful debut at Naples in 1846. He came to the United States in 1848 and played in concerts under Maretzek's management. He also gave

many concerts of his own, and made tours with Parodi, Frezzolini, La Grange, Amalia Patti, and others, and subsequently embarked upon the hazardous career of the impresario. He was not a piano virtuoso, but a very refined and scholarly player, with much facility and a fine touch. He also wrote some light and graceful compositions.

As a man Maurice Strakosch was always a gentleman. At least, I have never seen him when he was not courteous, refined, and dignified. He was quiet and reticent in manner, and a manager whose statements were rarely exaggerated. Perhaps if he had been longer connected with operatic management he might have taken on more of the arrogance, subtlety, and love of embellishment which characterize so many of the guild. Still, he was identified with it long enough to have formed some sensible opinions about opera, particularly the Italian. He was not a believer in the star system, and thought it was hurtful to the opera. In his own charming "Recollections" he says: "Let certain 'stars' disappear whose exigency has brought about a deplorable state of things, and soon the artistic sky will brighten. As long as people continue to believe that Italian representations are impossible without a diva, directors in London, as in Paris, Vienna, and St. Petersburg, can only make useless efforts to raise opera, ruining themselves without benefit to art." He was also opposed to the payment of extravagant salaries to artists, because they are not proportionate to the service rendered. His views about salaries, however, may have been colored by the fact that he did not

manage high-priced divas. They might have changed, perhaps, had he had the management of Adelina Patti in opera, though some of the salaries she received were beyond his wildest imaginings. Maurice Strakosch was a good story-teller and a most entertaining talker, once the ice was broken. He was very fond of quoting a saying of Berlioz to him, that there are three classes of singers: "Those who have voices and can't sing; those who can sing and have no voices; and those who have no voices and cannot sing, yet do sing all the same." Turning to me with a twinkle in his eye, he added: "That third class is the most numerous in my experience."

Maurice Strakosch died at Paris in 1887, the city which he loved as passionately as did his sister-in-law, Carlotta Patti. His "Recollections" was published in the same year. Its closing paragraph has a mournful interest in this connection:

"Maurice Strakosch hopes to meet all his artists in a better world; there he will have no engagements to give them, which will double his pleasure in listening again to the beautiful voices which have been his delight here below. As much for them as for himself, however, he hopes that reunion in the skies will not come promptly, and he has no desire to hasten the happy moment. For the present he is satisfied to thank all those whose talent has so much contributed to make less painful the labors of his long career."

Max Maretzek was an interesting figure as an impresario, though he had more experience as a conductor. He started out in life with the intention of being a physician, but later discovered that his bent

was toward music. He studied composition and wrote some light operas, which were produced in London with a fair degree of success. They were ephemeral, however, as was his "Sleepy Hollow," a pretty trifle, which he brought out in Chicago. He was a man of irrepressible energy, of numerous failures, and deep-seated pessimism. He began his active musical life as a conductor in Germany, and in 1844 had the same position at Her Majesty's in London. He came to this country in 1848, and for a quarter of a century was engaged either with the baton or in the management of operatic troupes. He began his American career in New York at the Astor Place Opera House, the morning after the Forrest-Macready riots, and managed there for three seasons — which might have been successful had it not been for the advent of Jenny Lind, against whom it was impossible for him to contend, although he brought Parodi from London expressly for that purpose. From that time until 1860 he was manager at the Astor Place Opera House, the Academy of Music, and Niblo's, and during the same period went to Havana and Mexico, where he made a good deal of money, which he subsequently lost in this country. It was during the same period, I think, that he introduced the following works: "Trovatore," "Rigoletto," "The Prophet," "L'Africaine," "Crispino," "Romeo and Juliet," "Traviata," "Poliuto," Linda," "Favorita," and "Don Pasquale." It may interest the reader to know that the artists in the first performance of "Trovatore," which he produced in 1855, were Steffanone, Vestvali, Brignoli, Amodio, and Rocco. After 1860 he gave up management

and wielded the baton. His career as impresario was checkered with successes and failures, quarrels and litigations. Either his chorus or his orchestra was on strike most of the time. He had wars with newspapers and controversies with the critics, for he was apt with his pen. He had little idea of the practical uses of money, and squandered it right and left. While an impresario in New York, a complimentary ball was tendered him to help him out of pecuniary difficulties. Wishing to do something himself, he insisted upon providing the flooring, the flowers, and the supper, as the result of which he found himself several hundred dollars deeper in debt than he was before the ball. He was a thorough man of the world, a fastidious *bon vivant*, recklessly generous, and an incorrigible fatalist. He draws a little picture of himself in his gossipy "Crotchets and Quavers," wherein he writes, in a letter to Berlioz, that he belongs to all parties and creeds in general and none in particular; that in cookery he relishes the delicacies of the season, such as halibut, prairie chicken, and bear steak, and that all ladies between fifteen and thirty are noticeable. In the same connection he sets forth a political epigram of curious significance, namely, that all governments are respectable, but he prefers that one which gives the least sign of its existence. But despite all his peculiarities, his pessimism and fatalism, he was a cheery soul after the clouds had rolled by, a delightful companion, an excellent, vivacious writer, a man of quick wit and ready information, and as honest a manager as ever served the public. He died in 1897, leaving, like nearly all

other impresarios, nothing to show for his long career but his reputation; but his reputation was that of an honest, sincere servant of the public, but, unlike some of his class, poorly remunerated.

Jacob Grau, whose name is very familiar in operatic annals, was probably better known to opera-goers than the other managers, as he allowed himself to be seen occasionally and his name was always writ large on posters and in advertisements. He presented himself quite as conspicuously as his artists, so that "J. Grau," in association with operatic affairs, came to be as familiar as a household word. He made many artistic pretensions; indeed, from the fervor with which he did so, one might infer that he was sacrificing himself on the altar of art for the sake of the people, and that he was spending his money without a pang in order that the public should have Italian opera performed as the composers desired. He may have been honest in this. He may have deluded himself into thinking that he cared but little for the dollars, and that "J. Grau" was satisfied with contributing to the progress of art. But if such was the case, "J. Grau" had a singular way of showing it, for his methods indicated a very commercial soul. I have no doubt that he honestly tried to give people the worth of their money; but if the figures on the box sheet showed a balance against him, he manifested unmistakable signs of distress. When business was good, he never appeared in newspaper offices, but sent his nephew; but when business was bad, he was

a frequent visitor, and long and piteous were his tales of woe, and most sorrowful were his complaints of the ingratitude of the public after all that he had done for it. Then dark hints would follow that it might be his last season, for he was convinced that Chicago did not appreciate his efforts. When business was bad, "J. Grau" would appear near the theatre entrance indifferently attired, wandering about with dejected mien, one eye furtively watching the box-office, and his whole bearing seemingly expressing personal hopelessness and pecuniary distress. On the other hand, when business was good and crowds were flocking to the opera like doves to the windows, and the box-office was besieged, behold "J. Grau" flitting about in his crush hat, immaculate tie, and superlative evening habit, his face wreathed with a continuous performance of smiles and an expression of serenest satisfaction. "J. Grau's" hat was at any time an infallible index of business.

Most impresarios have trouble with their prima donnas or tenors, but "J. Grau" escaped. I do not know how he managed it, but possibly he recognized that they were the essential factors of his enterprise and that he could not afford to alienate them. I suspect he used to make the chorus people suffer vicariously for the offences of the principals, after the manner of the old English sovereigns, who kept an urchin from the streets in readiness to suffer chastisements for the misbehavior of the princes. As a matter of fact, "J. Grau" had much trouble with his chorus people, and they were of the kind to make

it. No manager ever brought together a more venerable aggregation of signoras and signors than he. Some of them must have sung with Persiani and Malibran, and others may have been on the boards with Cuzzoni and Bordoni. He used to say that some of the chorus were harmless, good-natured growlers as long as he kept them well supplied with macaroni, but that the others were a mob of chronic fault-finders, ready to revolt upon the slightest pretext, and most ready to rise just before the curtain rose, and that the only way to be sure of a performance was to kill one of them whenever two or three were seen with their heads together, otherwise you would have to pay them whatever they demanded and kill yourself. But "J. Grau" after all brought many fine artists to Chicago and produced opera in good style. It was trying, however, to endure his homilies on art and his assurances of willingness for self-sacrifice.

"J. Grau" was not so sincere as Maurice Grau, whom I mention a little out of chronological order because he was Jacob's nephew. His methods were radically different from those of his uncle. When I first met Maurice Grau, he was his uncle's advance agent. He served him also as ticket taker, ticket seller, and in nearly every other subordinate capacity, and during his apprenticeship learned more about managing opera than "J. Grau" ever knew. His experiences led him to the conclusion that opera was purely a business proposition, and that so far as the manager was concerned it should be produced not from the musical

but from the commercial standpoint. He was frank enough to admit that he presented opera not as a luxury for others at his expense, or as an agency for elevating the musical condition of the public, but as an investment for the profit of himself and the stockholders. Once, when asked his opinion of high art, he replied: "I think it 's the art to make money, and the higher the bank account, the higher the art."

Maurice Grau was the most successful of all the impresarios, though he knew little about music and was more or less at the mercy of his singers. He was associated with Abbey and Schoeffler for a long time and was sole manager for about ten years. During these periods he introduced to the American public the De Reszkes, Calve, Schumann-Heink, Sembrich, Eames, Melba, Ternina, Gadski, Nordica, Rubinstein, Wieniawski, Aimée, Capoul, Sarasate, Joseph Hofmann, besides some of the great dramatic artists, among them Salvini, Bernhardt, Coquelin, Rejane, and Henry Irving. Personally he was the least pretentious of men. He was courteous and urbane in his relations to others, but very quiet and reserved. As far as the expression of feelings is concerned, he was literally a sealed book, for, if he was elated or depressed, if he was making money or losing money, he gave no sign. He was always studiously polite in his greeting, but made no more talk than was necessary. He was lenient in management, especially with his prima donnas, even when they violated their contracts by declining to sing, nor did he interfere with them more than was absolutely necessary.

Though not a musician, he rarely made mistakes in the selection of artists or in the arrangement of a repertory. He avoided misunderstandings with newspapers, and seldom if ever disappointed the public. The best evidence of his success is the fact that when his health broke down from too much work and too little exercise he retired with a snug fortune, while his uncle retired without anything, and his old partner, Abbey, died in poverty. Shrewd management of opera and shrewd investments in Wall Street paid him well. He deserved his success as one of the best and most judicious of managers.

I must now go back a few years and present Diego De Vivo to my readers. He had been everything by turn and nothing long. He was a child of sunny Italy, but sunny Italy did not appreciate his rare qualities, or it would not have allowed him to leave, much less expatriate him as a dangerous agitator. This nervous, restless Jack-in-the-box at first decided he would be a priest, but the religious life was too quiet for him; then he studied architecture. Blue prints did not amuse him long, for we next find him in the army, teaching gymnastics to his fellow soldiers. He should have been well fitted for this kind of work, for he was as lithe as the Human Frog and active as a whirling dervish. Then, with a versatility wellnigh unintelligible, he appeared as a book agent. During his canvassing, however, he sold books which objected to the government, whereupon the government objected to him and invited him to leave the country.

He stayed not upon the order of his going and came to New York in 1854. Finding that city, even in those early days, flooded with book agents, he picked up a living for a time by teaching Italian, and also had the good luck to meet with Brignoli, who employed him as his secretary. This gave him an opportunity to meet artists, and among them was Gazzaniga, who was so attracted by him that she employed him as her agent. This was in 1860.

I was seated at my desk one fine morning in that year when De Vivo appeared before me — a swarthy, black-eyed, very erect man, voluble of tongue, and with a smile which reached from ear to ear. His nervous contortions, abundant grimaces, expressive gestures of hands and shrugs of shoulders as he introduced himself, reminded me of Figaro, in the "Factotum" scene, while his personal appearance suggested Captain Kydd — the suggestion being heightened by his fierce blood-red cravat, in which was inserted a skull and cross-bones stickpin. He visited me many times afterwards in the interests of Kellogg, Parepa-Rosa, Wachtel, Aimée, Di Murska, and others, but he was always the same De Vivo, the same fascinating factotum and gentlemanly pirate, whether on the heights of success or in the depths of failure. I never saw his flow of spirits checked but once. This was in 1872. He had selected Wachtel as the winning number of the operatic lottery, and was sure of success because it was the first season of opera after the Big Fire. But Wachtel had been hard gripped by tonsilitis as the penalty of much shouting, and the season was abruptly

ended. Poor De Vivo, whose ticket drew a blank, came to see me, and for once he was the picture of despair. The fierceness of the pirate and the acrobatic mirthfulness of Figaro had disappeared. His only exclamation was: "My dear friend! no Wachtel, no Postilion, no opera! all gone! De Vivo has lost and must go back to New York! Is it not hard? Good-bye, my dear friend! But De Vivo will come back some time and be happy again." I bade him good-bye and wished him good luck, and as he turned with a loud sigh he looked the image of despair. His grief probably did not last long, not farther than Michigan City, for nothing could keep De Vivo down any length of time. He had the saving grace of humor, a harmless vanity, and a sunny nature, for his piratical aspect belied him, that enabled him to rise superior to any buffetings of fortune. It was a rare treat to talk with him when he was in his gayest moods, for he had an endless stock of good stories and his comments upon artists were always interesting. He had a ready wit, and sometimes it was caustic, as when he was asked if anything could be stronger than Carl Formes' voice. He instantly replied: "Yes! his good opinion of himself." But De Vivo had a good opinion of himself also. At the close of one of his seasons, when Parepa-Rosa was about to return to New York, he was asked if she would sing with him the next season. He promptly replied: "Without a De Vivo there can be no Parepa." Such faith in oneself ought to move mountains, but in the end it availed De Vivo little, for he died in 1898 so poor that he had to be

buried by the Artists' Fund. I think De Vivo made a mistake in trying to be a manager, for he was a born actor, and had he been on the stage with his imitative powers, his keen sense of humor, his overflowing vitality, and mercurial disposition, he might have been one of the comedians of the ages.

Max Strakosch, brother of Maurice, was associated with De Vivo, as well as "J. Grau," in some of his undertakings. He was the Mercutio of the impresarios. His imagination was limitless and picturesque. His disposition was sunny, and he was as full of giggles as a girl. Never was there a more cheery optimist. I never met him that his face was not irradiated with smiles, that he did not have the finest of all his companies with him, and that everything was not rosy. He was very democratic, and did not isolate himself after the manner of other impresarios. He liked to have people know he was Max Strakosch, brother of Maurice, and brother-in-law of Adelina Patti. His letters and his interviews abounded with the most affable insincerity and extraordinary embellishment, which he fancied would not be questioned because he believed his statements were correct. He did not mean to mislead or deceive. His imagination was simply too strong for his sense of the verities. He was also a cheerful philosopher, unspoiled by success and undismayed by failure. It is told of him that one day, looking over his books, he found himself at the season's close $40,000 out of pocket. His assets were seven dollars in currency, and a box of matches which he carried about with him as a cigarette convenience. He calmly reviewed the

financial situation, but could reach no decision as to his next move. Finally he concluded to let his matches decide for him. He would throw them upon the table, and if there was an even number of them, he would go on; if an odd number, he would suspend. The number was even. He at once resumed, looked fate squarely in the face, made new engagements, and the next season had a handsome balance in his favor. His advertisements, in which his imagination had full play, were extraordinary, as I have already shown in one instance. Indeed the ethical significance of an "ad" never occurred to him. Once, when asked why he had announced several unimportant persons, to create the impression he had a very large troupe, he replied that they were not engaged. "But," said his questioner, "if you want to advertise people whom you have not engaged, why not select names that will help you,—Patti, Nilsson, or Kellogg?" His naive reply was that the people would want to see them, but these people nobody would care for. It would not be fair to infer from this that his companies were full of dummies. He brought out many excellent troupes, and his seasons were very enjoyable. His 1873 company, which included Nilsson, Maresi, Torriani, Campanini, Capoul, Maurel, Del Puente, Nannetto, and Scolari, was one of the most brilliant that ever sang in this country. Among other artists who were members of his companies were Kellogg, Carlotta Patti, Annie Louise Cary, Albani, Tietjens, Lucca, Di Murska, Lagrange, Adelaide Phillips, Gazzaniga, Gassier, Brignoli, Susini, Jamet, and Formes. Poor Max's last days were clouded with great physical suffering and a

breach-of-promise suit, but, for the latter, I fancy the promise of marriage must have been but one more flight of his vivid imagination. Its insincerity must have been so affably apparent, it is surprising that the maiden, however lacerated and vindictive she may have been, did not at once release him without thought of pecuniary compensation. And I also fancy that he bore his last sufferings with the same kind of cheerful philosophy that had characterized him throughout his career.

I must draw my memories of the impresarios to its close with some reference to Colonel Mapleson, — Colonel James Henry Mapleson of Her Majesty's Theatre, as his letter-heads announced him. The Colonel received his military title from H. R. H. the Commander-in-Chief, who graciously permitted him to do duty in the volunteer service, participate in battalion drills, and occasionally command one of the volunteer regiments. The Colonel also participated in the active duty of assisting at officers' mess, and performed it with alacrity and skill, as he was a valiant trencherman. Apart from his military service, I have his own authority for stating that he had been student, critic, violinist, composer, concert director, and musical agent before he became impresario, though his achievements in these various departments could not have been very surprising. It is only as impresario that Colonel James Henry Mapleson of Her Majesty's appears interesting. He was the typical Englishman, tall, broad-shouldered, well made, rosy faced, military whiskered, and military

in his bearing. His career had been thickly strewn with quarrels, debts, litigations, and bankruptcies when I first met him, and yet they seemed to have left no scars. He was very pompous and haughty, as became one who had served Her Majesty both with sword and fiddle bow. As he stood before me for the first time in my little office he seemed to fill it. He laid his card upon my desk, and as I read the name with its prefix and suffixes I felt that I was in the atmosphere of royalty. He was quite gracious, however, on this occasion, as he wished favors. The Colonel had three forms of address. If he were seeking favors, it was "My dear fellow," with a conventional smile; if he were on good terms with you and the occasion was social, it was "My boy," with measured dignity; if he were not on good terms, it was "Sir," very haughtily. Upon this occasion I was addressed as "My dear fellow." Two or three days afterward, a criticism having displeased him, he stalked into my room and threw his card upon my desk, with the words, "Take my card to the editor-in-chief, sir." The worm thus addressed turned and replied, "Take it yourself, sir." But waiving the Colonel's pomposity and imperiousness, he was entertaining after all, and much could be forgiven him, for never before was impresario so harried by prima donnas, pestered by their husbands, persecuted by creditors and musicians, and chased by duns as Colonel James Henry Mapleson of Her Majesty's; and yet troubles did not disturb him, or, if they did, he showed no sign of it. He assumed debts as if they were every-day trifles, and jocundly skipped through bankruptcies. He was in the

operatic business twenty years or more at Her Majesty's and Drury Lane in London, and in the intervals used to bring his troupes over here, and excellent ones they were. Chicago should always hold him in grateful memory by reason of his operatic festival in 1855. For this gala occasion a temporary opera house was erected in the north end of the Exposition Building on the Lake Front, which is so delightfully connected with musical memories. The Colonel's chorus was increased to three hundred and the orchestra to one hundred, with the veteran Arditi at its head. The company was an imposing one, including Adelina Patti, Fursch-Madi, Dotti, Scalchi, Steinbach, and Nevada; the tenors, Gianinni, Rinaldini, Cardinali, Vicini, Bialetto, and Nicolini; the barytones, De Anna and De Pasqualis; and the bassos, Cherubini, Caracciolo, Manni, De Vaschetti, and Serbolini. During the two weeks' season, "Semiramide," "L'Africaine," "Mirella," "Aida," "Lucia di Lamermoor," "Martha," "Der Freischütz," "La Sonnambula," "Il Trovatore," "Puritani," "Faust," and "Lohengrin" were produced in the order named. Such crowds, such enthusiasm, Chicago had never known before, and Colonel James Henry Mapleson of Her Majesty's had never seen their like. Every one effervesced with hilarity. The Colonel was called before the curtain on the last night, and expressed his feelings with difficulty and dignity. The Opera Festival Association engrossed for him a special expression of thanks, and musical committees and civic bodies passed resolutions of admiration and gratitude. The mayor, Carter H. Harrison the elder, whose love

of music is spread abroad in the otherwise dry pages of the "Congressional Record," gave the Colonel the freedom of the city, which the Colonel declared was a compliment which had never been tendered to an Englishman before and never would be again. And then in an outburst of enthusiasm the Colonel made his finest bow, and assured the mayor that "Chicago will within a very few years become the first city in the United States and probably in the world." It was a festive time for the Colonel, and he must have looked back many times with longing as the train swiftly bore him away into regions where he must encounter fresh troubles. But six years later Colonel James Henry Mapleson of Her Majesty's died and went to that better land where "the wicked cease from troubling."

CHAPTER XIV

THEODORE THOMAS

EARLY VISITS TO CHICAGO — OUR FIRST MEETING — HIS HONESTY OF CHARACTER — A LOYAL FRIEND — HIS BROAD CULTURE — LOVE OF CONVIVIALITY — AVERSION TO SENTIMENTALISM — THREE DISAPPOINTMENTS — COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION — CINCINNATI COLLEGE OF MUSIC — AMERICAN OPERA COMPANY — NOTABLE SAYINGS

THE career of Theodore Thomas as an orchestra conductor is so well known that my memories of him will be mainly confined to the man rather than the musician. The whole country will remember him with baton in hand, and what he accomplished as the pioneer and promoter of higher music, but few knew him on the human side — his personal traits, his strong characteristics, his wide culture, his loyal friendships, and the warm, kindly heart that beat beneath an apparently austere exterior; a heart that felt sympathy with suffering humanity, and with the smallest creature in the Felsengarten summer home which he loved so dearly. I must preface this, however, with a brief statement of his earliest visits to Chicago, for very few persons have any knowledge of them.

Theodore Thomas came to Chicago in 1854 as first violinist in a small orchestra accompanying a concert troupe composed of Ole Bull, Amalia Patti, contralto, Maurice Strakosch, pianist, Bertucca Maretzek, harpist.

In October, 1858, he made his second visit, in the same capacity, in a concert troupe directed by Carl Anschutz, under the management of Ullman. It included Madame Schuman, soprano; Carl Formes, basso; and Ernest Perring, tenor. The orchestra, though it numbered only twenty-one players, was such a remarkable one that its members should be placed on record. It included: First violins, Thomas, Mosenthal, and Romani; second violins, Besig, Bernstein, and Launn; viola, Matzka; 'cello, Bergmann; double basses, Herzog and Arnoldi; flute, Siedler; oboe, Meyer; clarinets, Kiefer and Amici; bassoons, Kuhlman and Bartoli; French horns, Schmitz and Kullinger; trumpet, Lacroix; trombone, Letsch; kettledrums, Haberkorn. Two concerts were given, and in the second one (October 7) Mr. Thomas played Vieuxtemps's "Reverie." In March, 1859, he was in Chicago again as solo violinist and conductor, the troupe including Carl Formes, Madame Laborde, soprano, Madamoiselle Poinsot, alto, and Gustav Satter, pianist. In the first concert Mr. Thomas played the "Elegy of Tears," and in the third concert led the Mendelssohn Society, of which Adolph W. Dohn was director, in a performance of Titl's "Consecration of Solomon's Temple."

Mr. Thomas did not visit Chicago again until 1869, when he came with his own orchestra. It was an ideal concert orchestra of forty pieces, perfectly trained, and every man of them an artist in his way. His great symphony orchestra of a later period never did finer work than that little band of Central Park Garden players, so far as precision, beautiful shading, and quality

are concerned. I recall my first meeting with him on that occasion as vividly as if it were but yesterday. He was then in his thirty-fourth year, full of courage, hope, and ambition, and with a capacity for work which was extraordinary. I was presented to him by Mr. Dohn, a mutual friend. His greeting was cordial but characteristic of the man. He was very glad to see me, but I must not expect him to call upon me, as he was a very busy man. Besides, he never went into newspaper offices. He never read what they wrote, as he knew his work thoroughly. This brusque greeting shows the supreme confidence he had in himself, and yet never was a musician more free from personal vanity. He was master of his art and master of himself. A musician once said to him in a discussion, "Perhaps you are right." His terse reply was: "I know I am right, or I should not have expressed the opinion." The friendship begun on that far-away day in November, 1869, remained unbroken until the day of his death, in January, 1905. Our relations were so intimate, and I know his wishes and preferences so well, that I am sure I shall not go contrary to them in anything I may say concerning him as a man. Upon one occasion he said to me: "Some things might be left unsaid until I am gone." Now that he has gone they may be said.

One of the most striking traits of Mr. Thomas's character was his rugged honesty, and this not merely in regard to his musical work, but as affecting every action in his life. In the attainment of his musical ideals, indeed, he was never diverted from his lofty purpose by disappointments, disasters, opposition, or misunderstanding.

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He kept his ideals to the last, and unquestionably he sacrificed his life to them. He was so firmly grounded upon moral and spiritual honesty that he could not endure even the appearance of dishonesty in others. He said to me once, speaking of a very prominent man who had acted toward him in an underhanded way: "I do not allow that man to speak to me." He dismissed such persons from his acquaintance just as he dismissed players from his orchestra who were guilty of trickery, no matter how well they might play. Only once do I remember his giving way to discouragement, and then only for a moment. It was during the memorable Summer Night concerts in Chicago. The city was in a disturbed condition, owing to the great railroad strike. The concerts were thinly attended. At one end of the huge Exposition Building was the concert hall. The other end was occupied by military companies waiting for an emergency call. I reached the building one evening some time before the hour of opening, and saw Mr. Thomas sitting at a table, with his head upon his hands. He beckoned me to come to him. I inquired if he was ill. "I'm a little blue to-night, old friend," he replied. "I have been thinking, as I sit here, that I have been swinging the baton fifteen years, and I do not see that the people are any farther ahead from where I began, and as far as my pockets are concerned I am not as well off." He paused a minute, then added: "But I am going to keep on if it takes another fifteen years." I have mentioned this incident in connection with his honesty because he kept on until he had paid every dollar of arrears to

his old orchestra long after he was legally obliged to do so. There was no power which could make him lower his standards to gain popularity. No commercial inducements were strong enough to make him prostitute his art, as was conspicuously demonstrated by his action while musical director at the Columbian Exposition, of which I shall speak in this chapter.

Another characteristic trait of Mr. Thomas was his loyalty as a friend. He was cautious about admitting any one to his confidence. He was so self-reliant that it almost seemed as if he never craved sympathy or affection, nor was he demonstrative in his professions toward friends; but when once he made a friend, he never lost him through any fault of his own. He carried out to the letter Polonius's injunction to Laertes:

> "Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
> Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel."

An instance of his loyalty to an old friend was shown in the last days of Carl Bergmann. He and Bergmann had been intimately associated in the Mason-Thomas chamber concerts. Each recognized the musical ability of the other. They were in fact the pioneers who prepared the way for others. They did the hard, unprofitable work of breaking the ground from which others have reaped rich harvests. In time, however, Bergmann grew jealous of Thomas. He was a splendid musician, but personally a weak man. He put many obstacles in Thomas's way, and greatly annoyed him; but when Thomas had an orchestra of his own their roads diverged. Bergmann, meanwhile, was the victim

of his own weaknesses. He alienated his friends and sank lower and lower. One evening Thomas went to a restaurant much frequented by musicians, and upon entering found Bergmann in a wretched plight, with the crowd making sport of him. His temper blazed up at once as he thought of what Bergmann had been in his better days. He advanced and rebuked the crowd in an outburst of wrath, of which he was capable at times, and threatened to thrash the lot of them if they did not let their victim alone. "Respect the Bergmann that was, if you have no respect for the Bergmann that is," he thundered at them. The crowd slunk away, and Thomas then took Bergmann home, though he had long before forfeited all claim upon his friendship. The incident shows the man.

Most people think that Mr. Thomas devoted himself entirely to the study and practice of music and was unfamiliar with other subjects. This is a mistake. He necessarily gave much time to his work, for its demands were exacting, and he had to keep up with all the new developments in the world of art; but, notwithstanding that, he was a man of broad culture, an earnest student of philosophy, history, and poetry, and well posted in the great movements of the time. His favorite authors were Shakespeare, Goethe, and Schiller. He was well read in the German philosophical systems and deeply versed in the ancient and modern literature of music. His table talk would make an entertaining volume of itself, for he was a fluent converser on almost every subject, and his ideas were original and illuminating. In this connection, also, it may be said that he had a rare fund of

humor and was an excellent story-teller. Those who only saw him with baton in hand would hardly believe him "a fellow of infinite jest and excellent fancy" among his congenial friends. To meet them at little dinners was his delight. He was a connoisseur and expert in everything pertaining to a menu, and the most delightful of hosts. How well I remember his quaint and hearty invitation on one occasion: "Come and have a good time, and drink to the gods as the Greeks did, who loved only the good and the true." And as memory brings back so many of these sparkling, convivial occasions, I recall an "over the Rhine" Commerz at the close of one of the Cincinnati festivals, in which "The Messiah" and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony had been given so much to his liking that he invited the artists and several musicians to celebrate it. Those who were there will never forget the occasion, for Mr. Thomas was never more delightfully genial. The discussions and good stories at the "Tenth Symphony," as the event was christened, were memorable. Apropos of these discussions, in one related to the tempos of "The Messiah," he explained his ideas substantially as follows: "A man of Handel's immense vital energy never intended effects to be made dull and lethargic. I take these tempos just as I feel them. As Wagner said, the metronome is worthless. The leader who depends upon a metronome had better take to cobbling shoes. As to 'The Messiah,' I don't care anything about the traditions. I am going to have the style and tempos as I feel them myself." The last convivial occasion at which I met him was the last one in his life,

and one of the most enjoyable. Two other gentlemen, concerned with the publication of his biography, who had not met him before, were present, and spent a delightful afternoon. Music was not alluded to, but a great variety of topics was discussed, upon which he had so much to say that was vitally significant, far-seeing, and comprehensive, that these gentlemen, who imagined him to be a man wholly absorbed in music, were surprised to find what a strong grasp he had upon all the topics of the time. A few weeks later Mr. Thomas died, but the little social meeting that afternoon will long linger in the memories of the three guests.

A peculiar characteristic of Mr. Thomas was his freedom from sensationalism and "sweet sentimentalism" in his work as well as in his life. He was strong and sane, and had high ideals, but was not given to the emotional. One evening, at the house of a noted pianist, two of his string players performed a very emotional duet, much to the delight of the ladies. When they had finished, he turned to me with a smile and shrug of the shoulder, and remarked, "A nice pair of moon-struck sentimentalists, are n't they?" Only a short time before his death, speaking of the future of his orchestra, he said to me that he hoped it would not have a Slav leader after he was gone, for they were either sensational or played for the sentimentalists. It was rare, however, that he criticised either conductors or composers. If he did not approve of the latter, he would give them a hearing as a matter of musical news, and then consign them to his librarian's shelves. Now and then, however, he expressed himself without reserve, as when he said he had

no patience with musicians whose education begins and ends with Wagner. I met him one day alone in his library, when he was looking through the score of the "Domestic Symphony," which he had just received from Richard Strauss. I asked him what he thought of it. He replied: "I do not care to express an opinion about the music itself, but how can a composer thrust his personality and family affairs upon people? What do they care for him or his wife and babies and relatives, or for what is going on in his home? Strauss is lowering the standards. He did better in 'Zarathustra' and 'Heldenleben,' but is he not sacrificing quality in all his works?"

Mr. Thomas had three failures in his life which were bitter disappointments and for which he was in no way responsible. One of these failures was his Columbian Exposition scheme in 1893. He had planned upon a most noble scale a representation of the progress of music from a very early period to the present, which should be in consonance with the ideas underlying the Exposition. His scheme was carried out for three months, under many difficulties. He gradually discovered, however, that his work was hampered by some of those who should have actively coöperated with him. The musical committee itself was not in sympathy with him, and did not realize the greatness of his scheme. At last a combined onslaught was made upon him because he would not consent to have his scheme dominated by commercial influences. He drew the line sharply in defence of himself and a distinguished artist. Certain piano dealers raised a clamor, and rather than

lower himself by engaging in a vulgar quarrel with men who could not, or would not, understand his motives, he promptly resigned. He made no complaints in his letter of resignation, but simply advised the Committee to treat music as an amusement, not as an art, during the remainder of the Exposition period, and generously offered his services without compensation if they desired his advice. In a letter to me afterwards he simply wrote: "I cannot tell you what pain these attacks have given me. My age and my record should have protected me from them. But let it pass. Art is long." Theodore Thomas would never recognize commercialism in music.

Mr. Thomas's second failure was his administration of the Cincinnati College of Music in 1880. In this case, also, he had planned a great scheme which contemplated a musical university upon a broad and noble foundation, and only accepted the directorship upon the explicit understanding that he would not interfere with the business management, and the trustees must not interfere with the musical management. His words were: "I must insist upon being intrusted with the exclusive management of the school, not submitting my judgment to the trustees in musical matters." But for one man he probably would have succeeded in carrying out his scheme; but that one man, who stood high socially in Cincinnati and had great influence in the College, continually intermeddled with Mr. Thomas's management. I was a witness of this intermeddling on two occasions, and listened to the stinging rebukes administered to him by the director, whose patience was

worn out, but the man was so wrapped up in his own importance that they made no impression upon him. Finding that he could be of no use under such circumstances, Mr. Thomas resigned. His labors for a great seat of musical learning in that city ceased, but he continued his labors for the success of its famous festivals. In the last one which he directed, however, the tax upon his strength was tremendous, and undoubtedly was one of the causes which hastened his death.

Mr. Thomas's third failure was the American Opera Company, organized in 1886 for the representation of opera in English by American artists. It is sufficient to know that it collapsed after two years of hard labor, frequent litigations, annoying strikes, unpaid bills, sheriffs' attachments, and the sacrifice of his own salary for several months, — all owing to the wretched business management of one person! And yet, in the midst of all these drawbacks, opera has never been given better in this country, nor have opera goers ever seen a better ensemble. He told me that the failure was due "to inexperience and misdirected enthusiasm in business management and to misappropriation of money," — a charitable statement when we consider that he wrote upon the back of the programme of the last performance: "The most dreadful experience I have ever had."

Before closing my recollections of the great leader who has done more for the musical education of the American people than any other, I must quote the following sayings of his, gathered from my letters and interviews with him, which throw a clear light upon

him as a musician, for, after all that may be said of him as a man, most people know him only as the musician and conductor:

"A symphonic orchestra shows the culture of a community, not opera. The man who does not know Shakespeare is to be pitied, and the man who does not understand Beethoven, and has not been under his spell, has not half lived his life. The master works of instrumental music are the language of the soul, and express more than any other art. Light music, 'popular,' so-called, is the sensual side of the art, and has more or less devil in it."

"Music should be to the vocalist what painting is to the artist. The score should be his brush and pigments. It should be only the rough materials, and his intelligence should so dispose them that the picture should be the masterpiece of his own work and imagination, not the single result of direction or accidental combination of colors."

"Throughout my life my aim has been to make good music popular, and it now appears that I have only done the public justice in believing, and acting constantly on the belief, that the people would enjoy and support the best in art when continually set before them in a clear, intelligent manner."

"People cannot read the new music, but they should keep abreast of it, and the only way to know it is to hear it. It does not follow that I approve or indorse it because I play it. It is due to the public to hear once. This has been a life-long idea with me."

"I will say that I have neither sympathy nor patience with those so-called musicians whose education begins and ends with Wagner. It is also a great drawback in this country that the musical public is either too busy or too phlegmatic to treat music as an art, but look upon it only as an amusement and a pastime. Conditions change, but progress is slow."

"I care not from what station in life come the thousands who sit before me. Beethoven will teach each according to his needs, and the very same cadence that may waft the thoughts of one to drowsy delight or oblivion may stir the heart of another to higher inspiration, may give another hope in his despair, may bring to yet another a message of love."

"I have always worked hard and always worked ahead, and know little of the past."

"In art the first rule is system and form; in art you cannot count your time."

"I agree with the present time, and prefer truth to European culture (hypocrisy); but I also admire to some extent good manners, and confess that I am in my inner self enough of a German that it makes me feel better if I can treat some one or some thing with respect."

"I have never wished to pose as an educator or a philanthropist, except in so far as I might help the public to get beyond certain so-called popular music which represents nothing more than sweet sentimentalism and rhythm on the level of the dime novel."

"Everything revenges itself on this earth. Wagner fights just as much to-day as when alive, perhaps when he wants peace; and Berlioz, with whom we thought to be free, had his centenary fall at a time to force the world to make up for lost time at the other end."

"The power of good music! Who among us can tell or measure it? Who shall say how many hearts it has soothed, how many tired brains it has rested, how many sorrows it has taken away? It is like the power of conscience,— mighty, immeasurable."

If the list of those who have appeared as soloists in Mr. Thomas's concerts during the last fifty years were

printed, it would include the name of every prominent vocal and instrumental performer in this country and most of those in Europe. If the list of those who have been aided by his counsels and encouraged by his approbation could be published, it would include a great number who have become famous and largely owe their fame to him.

To him Chicago also owes a debt of gratitude for fourteen years of constant and faithful devotion to the highest musical interests, and for his work during the twenty-two years preceding, in which he was preparing the way for the crowning achievement of his career, — the record of 1891–1904.

CHAPTER XV

MUSICAL FESTIVALS

PATRICK SARSFIELD GILMORE — HIS QUALITIES AS A BAND LEADER — CHICAGO REBUILDING JUBILEE — NATIONAL PEACE JUBILEE — ANVILS, ARTILLERY, AND CHURCH BELLS — PAREPA AND ADELAIDE PHILLIPS — INTERNATIONAL PEACE JUBILEE — A MONSTER AGGREGATION — MUSICAL EFFECT — INTERNATIONAL BANDS — JOHANN STRAUSS AND HIS PERSONALITY — FRANZ ABT — BENDEL AND THE AUTOGRAPH HUNTERS — MADAME RUDERSDORF — HER PECULIARITIES AND WILL — CINCINNATI FESTIVALS — CHICAGO MAY FESTIVALS

THE very name of Gilmore suggests musical festivals, by which I do not mean festivals devoted to the exposition of the higher music, like those at Cincinnati and Worcester, but festivals in which popular music is the feature and its exploitation on a colossal scale the object. Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore was not a musician of profound ability, but he was completely at home in music of a bright, showy, sensational character. He was an admirable bandmaster, and to him more than to any other, perhaps, is due the present concert band. He was a good leader, though somewhat eccentric in his use of the baton, picked good players for his bands, and made effective combinations of instruments. Whatever defects his bands may have had, they never lacked in brilliancy. His musical

schemes were nearly always planned upon a colossal scale, and required unusual and picturesque, sometimes startling, combinations. He once told me that he would be delighted if he could only have church bells, cannons, and anvils with every piece he played, not merely for their effect upon audiences, but because he enjoyed them himself. This passion for tumultuous noise and bizarre sensations was a curious feature in his musical make-up, for off the stage he was very quiet, refined, and unobtrusive, — in fact, an Irish gentleman, with all the engaging qualities of that class. On the stage, however, with cannon thundering, bells ringing, and anvils clanging, he was a totally different personality.

Gilmore's passion for band music was first awakened by hearing the English bands stationed from time to time in his native Athlone. His own instrument was the cornet, and his proficiency in playing it secured him the leadership of a band at Salem, Massachusetts, when he was nineteen years of age. His mania for monster display manifested itself at once in the big Fourth of July concerts which he gave on Boston Common. The Civil War furnished him a still wider area for his ambition. He was appointed musical director of the department at New Orleans by General Banks, and it was in that city he gave his first real festival, by celebrating the inauguration of Governor Hahn with a chorus of five thousand adults and children, a band of five hundred players, drum and trumpet corps, and the inevitable pieces of artillery. It was from that city also that he brought back "When Johnny comes marching home again." He claimed the authorship

of it. In the absence of any other claimant it may be credited to him.

Chicago had but one Gilmore festival, but Gilmore came here often. In 1860 his band escorted the New England delegations to the Republican National Convention which nominated Abraham Lincoln for the presidency, and gave several concerts at Metropolitan Hall. In 1864 he was at Bryan Hall. In 1868 he inaugurated the Charity Balls, and gave a week of promenade concerts at the Crosby Opera House, with Camilla Urso, violinist; Mrs. H. M. Smith, soprano; Dr. Guilmette, basso; and Arbuckle, cornetist. In February, 1875, Emma Thursby made her Chicago debut in his concerts. In 1876 he came again, and concert goers enjoyed the rare treat of hearing Levy and Arbuckle, the two greatest cornetists of the day, play duets. In 1878 he brought two excellent singers, Juliet Fenderson and Marie Salvotti. Indeed, Gilmore was here so often that Chicago became well acquainted with him, and greatly enjoyed the acquaintance.

His Chicago Jubilee came off in June, 1873, and was a three days' affair, intended to celebrate the rebuilding of the city during the eighteen months following the great fire. The concerts were given in the new passenger station of the Lake Shore Railroad. It was a structure which satisfied Gilmore's ideas of bigness, for it was nearly two blocks in length and accommodated forty thousand people. His band was enlarged to three hundred pieces, and a chorus of one thousand singers was organized by Mr. J. M. Butterfield. It was the kind of festival Gilmore liked—no soloists, simply a

multitude of voices and instruments uniting in the "Hallelujah Chorus," "The Heavens are telling," "The Star-Spangled Banner," "The American Hymn," the "Gloria" from Mozart's "Twelfth Mass," and other pieces, not forgetting the "Anvil Chorus" and all the anvils Gilmore could beg or borrow on the South side. It was a gala week for all concerned, and the festival closed with "the most magnificent and select social affair ever given in the country," as the official bulletin described it — "an elegant and *recherché* ball" in the rebuilt Chamber of Commerce, in which all "the distinguished citizens" coöperated with Gilmore, who furnished three orchestras, one for the dance, one for the promenade, and one for "the collation." All citizens were "distinguished" in Chicago's early days, all balls were "*recherché*," all suppers were "collations," and all the ladies were "the fairest daughters of our city." It was worth while living here then. They were joyous days just at that time, for Chicago had recovered from the disaster of 1871, the clouds of doubt and despair had all rolled away, and she was once more basking in the sunshine of hope. Does not the official bulletin say: "Everything seemed to favor and assist our people in the arduous task of rebuilding a destroyed city, and the results show a city the most remarkable in its architectural beauty and the most magnificent in its public and private buildings that has ever been erected in the history of the world!" No wonder Chicago was proud of her new and beautiful clothes.

This little jubilee, however, was an insignificant affair when compared with the two great Boston

jubilees, in which Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore, panoplied with musical glory, rose to the summit of his ambition. I attended both of them as a bewildered spectator and alternately enraptured and dazed auditor. In 1869 the country was at peace. Johnny had come "marching home again" and settled down, and Gilmore thought it was high time for the "hurrah," and for all to "feel gay." So he organized the National Peace Jubilee. Its main components were a building on the Boston Back Bay accommodating thirty thousand people; an orchestra of one thousand pieces; a chorus of ten thousand voices gathered from New England choirs and singing societies; a battery of artillery; a hundred anvils; half a dozen church bells; and Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore. The detailed features were Parepa-Rosa and Adelaide Phillips as soloists, and an orchestra composed as follows: First violins, 115; second violins, 100; violas, 65; 'cellos, 65; double basses, 85; piccolos and flutes, 25; clarinets, 78; oboes, 8; bassoons, 8; horns, 12; trumpets, 8; trombones, 84; tubas, 83; cornets, 83; barytones, 25; snare drums, 50; bass drums, 25; cymbals, 10; triangles, 10. I can hear those eighty-four trombones, eighty-three tubas, eighty-three cornets, and fifty snare drums even now, blending with the roar of the big organ and the mark time eruptions of anvils and artillery. There were some famous players, however, in that orchestra. Ole Bull headed the violins, and Carl Rosa and Wilhelm Schultze sat at the second and third desks. There were also the second violinists, Meisel, Eichler, and Reichardt; the viola players, Ryan and Heindl; the 'cellists, Wulf Fries, Suck, and

Mollenhauer; the flutists, Koppitz, Zöhler, and Carlo; the oboists, De Ribas, Mente, and Taulwasser; and the cornetist, Arbuckle. Of course there were times when there were apotheoses of racket. One of these was the occasion when General Grant entered the hall to the strains of "See the Conquering Hero comes," followed by the Anvil Chorus, accompanied by the artillery and the shouts of the assembled thousands, which almost drowned Gilmore's efforts to reach an *fff* that should express his wild longings for a climax to break the record. There was occasionally a humorous turn to affairs, as when in the opening concert the chorus and orchestra got almost inextricably tangled up in the heights of "The Star-Spangled Banner," and Gilmore lost control. He made desperate efforts to get them together, but when he found that they were getting snarled worse and worse, he signalled the big organ and the batteries, and somewhere and somehow in their united dins the orchestra and chorus untangled themselves and order came out of chaos. But it was not all noise in this festival, for the mass effect in the chorales, Parepa's singing of Gounod's "Ave Maria," with an obligato of two hundred violins, as well as her performance of the "Inflammatus" from Rossini's "Stabat Mater," and "Let the bright Seraphim," with Arbuckle's trumpet obligato, the voice and instrument uniting perfectly, both absolutely pure tones, as well as the performance of the "Quis Est Homo," from the "Stabat Mater" by Parepa and Adelaide Phillips, were expressions of tonal beauty long to be remembered. The "Old Hundred" also, which closed the festival, was

profoundly impressive when more than thirty thousand voices joined the mass chorus in singing the familiar old Doxology.

Now Gilmore, not content with one jubilee, sighed, like Alexander, for other worlds to conquer, and the opportunity presented itself in 1872. This country was not only at peace, but the rest of the world also, for the Franco-German War was over. Encouraged by the success of the National Peace Jubilee, he organized an International Peace Jubilee upon a still more extensive scale. Instead of an orchestra of one thousand, he assembled an orchestra of two thousand. Instead of a chorus of ten thousand, he collected a chorus of twenty thousand from all parts of the country. Instead of a hall seating thirty thousand, he had one seating fifty thousand. The "Bouquet of Artists," composed of one hundred and fifty professional singers, was a special feature; likewise a chorus of the ancient signors and signoras, gathered from various opera companies, which might better have been omitted. These formed the foundations of the great undertaking. The detailed features included the soloists Madame Peschka-Leutner and Madame Erminia Rudersdorf, sopranos; Arabella Goddard, Franz Bendel, and J. M. Wehli, pianists; Johann Strauss and Franz Abt, specially engaged to lead some of their own compositions; the Grenadier Guards Band of London, Dan Godfrey, leader; the Kaiser Franz Grenadier-Regiment Band of Berlin, Heinrich Saro, leader; the Band of the Garde Republicaine from Paris, M. Paulus, leader; the National Band from Dublin, Edwin Clements, leader; the Emperor William's

Household Cornet Quartette; the United States Marine Band, Henry Fries, leader; the Ninth Regiment Band from New York, D. L. Downing, leader; Gilmore's Band, P. S. Gilmore, leader; and the Jubilee Singers from Nashville. The triumph of the latter was achieved in the singing of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," set to the air, "John Brown's Body." Certainly John Brown's body never marched more grandly and noisily than it did then to the accompaniment of the Nashville singers, the mass chorus, the artillery and organ, the drum and trumpet chorus, the bells of Boston, and the hundred anvils robustly pounded by a hundred of the Boston firemen. It was an ensemble of fearful and wonderful sonority.

As a human spectacle it would be hard to imagine anything more impressive than this vast assemblage of thousands swept by waves of enthusiasm when the national anthems were sung, or subdued by a devotional spirit when the old familiar hymn tunes, like "Hebron" and "Coronation," were sung, for each concert closed with one of them, in which the audience was requested to join. The sight of the immense stage crowded with its thousands of singers and players, swayed by the baton of one man, was an impressive sight in itself.

This jubilee also had its humorous aspects, like the other. Nothing more ludicrous could be imagined than the frantic efforts of Gilmore to get his singers together when one section after another lost the beat and wandered off in all sorts of directions, instruments taking one road, the organ another, and singers another, for

all the world as if they were singing a Richard Strauss symphonic poem. To add to the humor of the situation, they were singing the aria, "All we like Sheep have gone astray," from "The Messiah." Unlike sheep, however, they did not follow their leader, but went "every one in his own way," until at last a panic ensued and a halt was ordered. It is confusing enough when an ordinary chorus goes to pieces, but when a chorus of twenty thousand and an orchestra of two thousand collapse, it is a cataclysm.

From the musical point of view, of course, there were many features of great interest; but what did this tremendous output of energy and enterprise accomplish after all? It proved, perhaps, that twenty thousand voices could be handled, and when the singers were familiar with the music, and the music was that of chorales, hymns, and anthems, and there were no fugued passages, or broken time, or close harmony, that satisfactory effects could be produced. And yet these effects in themselves were no finer than those produced by a smaller number of voices in a proportionately smaller hall. Indeed, Gilmore himself acknowledged to me afterwards that he was through with "tornado choruses." They remind one of volcanic eruptions, cyclones, and earthquakes — very grand and impressive, but not of any benefit to the surrounding country.

Some of the individual features of the Jubilee were of unusual interest. Johann Strauss was engaged for the festival, and conducted his "Blue Danube," "Wine, Woman, and Song," "Thousand and One Nights," and "Artists' Life" waltzes, the "Pizzicato Polka" and

"Circassian March"; also the "Jubilee Waltz," with the "Star-Spangled Banner" for the coda, which he wrote for the occasion. It was vapid and weak, as most "occasional pieces" are. Strauss was fascinating as a leader. At the time I saw him he was about forty years old. He was of medium stature, with a rather low and narrow forehead from which he brushed his hair straight back. He had the swarthy Austrian complexion, bright, restless, black eyes, and wore his side-whiskers English fashion. With his left leg a little advanced, and his violin resting upon his knee, he gave the time for a bar or two with his bow very gracefully, also marking time with his right foot. He would then play with the orchestra, his whole body swaying to the rhythm of the waltz — only for a minute, however, for as a new phrase developed itself, his bow would be in the air, the violin resting again on his knee. He would turn to each part when he gave the signal to come in, sometimes developing whole bars, note by note, then abruptly pausing for a beat or two, anon electrically springing into the music — feet, arms, legs, even the features of his face, moving to the tempo. He impressed his individuality upon every player, and they moved as one in the intoxicating delirium of the waltz. The effect upon the audience was almost as marvellous. All over the great building thousands of heads — black, blonde, and gray — were swaying in time. Children were fairly dancing. The heads of the singers were bobbing in time. The players yielded to the fascination and marked time with their bodies. And high above them all stood the presiding genius — the embodiment of the waltz rhythm.

Strauss's wife, Jetty Treffz, was with him. Off the stage Strauss spent most of his time smoking, card-playing, and receiving visitors. Madame Strauss spent much of her time reading the letters from his female admirers, and shearing her black poodle for small locks of "her husband's hair," which they craved, or writing his autograph. I suspect she greatly enjoyed these occupations, for she had a keen sense of humor.

Franz Abt, who was brought over by Gilmore to conduct his popular song, "When the Swallows homeward fly," was another interesting character. He was an elderly, rubicund man at that time, with a fatherly, benignant air and a smiling, prepossessing face. He would have made a typical Santa Claus. As every singer knew the song by heart, his task was an easy one, and the swallows flew homeward without the least difficulty. He conducted in an easy, graceful manner, and was hugely delighted with the effect of his song, for he had probably never dreamed that he should lead such a tremendous flight of swallows as that before him. He, too, had a fund of quiet humor, and laughed heartily at Tom Hoppins's caricature, in which the swallows' homeward flights were represented by a German with a huge stein of beer at his lips and a seraphic expression on his face.

Franz Bendel was a pianist of jubilee proportions in stature and strength. In his playing he reminded one of DeMeyer, so far as power is concerned. The demand for autographs from members of the chorus was so great that the artists were unable to satisfy it single-handed. One morning, at rehearsal of chorus by Carl Zerrahn,

P. S. Gilmore

Johann Strauss

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I was sitting with Gilmore and was much surprised when a messenger came to him with an autograph book and the request that Mr. Bendel would write his name in it. Gilmore turned to me and said, "She evidently thinks you are Bendel, and you must oblige her." I forged the name satisfactorily, and soon a flood of books reached me to be similarly inscribed, and the owners were delighted. I had no compunctions, for I was a collector myself, and well knew how the victims were persecuted. Herr Bendel subsequently thanked me for saving him to that extent. The assiduity and insistence of these autograph hunters were extraordinary. They lay in wait for the victims, besieged dressing-rooms, stood on guard at carriage doors, pursued them to their hotels, and some even invaded the sanctity of private apartments. Gilmore had his autographs written by his clerks, to whom the hunters were referred.

Madame Rudersdorf, whom I met two or three times, was another interesting character in the group of artists. She had had a successful European career in opera and oratorio, but at this time her powers were beginning to wane. She was still a fine singer, however, displayed extraordinary dramatic ability, and had a strong, resonant voice which she used with consummate skill, for she was a thoroughly trained musician, as her subsequent teaching career demonstrated. She was of medium height, stately of mien, and had dark, piercing eyes and a strong, expressive face. Her temper corresponded to her personal appearance, and her colors corresponded to her temper, for she was fond of dressing

in scarlet and black. In costumes of these colors she was a most imposing figure. She was also a woman of undaunted resolution and courage, brusque of speech, and sometimes brutally truthful, as when she sent a pupil home who belonged to one of the first families in Boston with this message: "Tell your mother I can make a voice, but I can't make ears and brains." Her son, Richard Mansfield, is said to have inherited some of her qualities.

Madame Rudersdorf died in 1882. For some years before her death she occupied a summer home at Lakeside. She spent her time reading, collecting rugs and bric-a-brac, of which she was very fond, and running a little fruit farm, where she could be found at work in top boots and a broad felt hat as early as five in the morning. The following directions for her last resting-place are interesting as showing her peculiar simplicity of character:

"I want to be buried in an oak coffin of the cheapest kind. The inside must be lined with zinc or lead, whichever is cheapest. I wish to be dressed in a chemise, skirt, and wrapper, my hair done up as now, with the black lace scarf now on my hat to be dressed with my hair. There is a heap of stones by the lake at Lakeside. A hut must be constructed of these stones and my coffin placed in it, and a cheap rustic fence built about it."

Her wishes were not carried out for sanitary reasons, but he would have been a bold man who had dared to refuse her request while she was living, judging from the lurid ultimatum I heard her deliver to Gilmore on one of the jubilee days when things were not going to suit Madame.

It is a far cry from the Peace jubilees to the biennial Cincinnati May festivals, inaugurated in 1873 by Theodore Thomas, the eighteenth of which was given this year (1908). They have been a continuous success, and have steadily grown in importance as expositions of the higher music and indices of its growth. I have attended all of these but two, and have seen the steady advance from their modest beginning to the highest standard of musical perfection in this country. Mr. Thomas was the conductor of sixteen of these festivals, and no higher testimonial to his service is needed than the closing words in the eloquent memorial adopted by the Directors of the Association:

"In the shadow of his death we pledge ourselves to continue the work which he began, and to maintain the Cincinnati festivals on the plane of excellence where he placed them, and in the spirit of conscientious endeavor and high purpose with which he endowed them."

How these festivals grew in importance under Theodore Thomas's direction is most clearly shown by a comparison of the first programme (1873) and that of the last festival he conducted (1904). The principal numbers of the first were Handel's "Dettingen Te Deum," selections from Gluck's "Orpheus," Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Schumann's "Gipsy Life," Mendelssohn's "Walpurgis Night," and Schubert's Symphony in C. The principal numbers of the sixteenth were Bach's Suite in B Minor, Bach's Mass in B Minor, Elgar's "Dream of Gerontius," Beethoven's Mass in D Major, Beethoven's Eighth and Ninth symphonies, Mozart's

Symphony in E flat, Berlioz's Hymn, op. 26, Brückner's Unfinished Symphony, Brahm's Rhapsodie, and Richard Strauss's "Till Eulenspiegel" and "Tod und Verklärung." Never were more exacting programmes laid out for players and singers than these. It is doubtful whether they could have found elsewhere in this country the appreciation which was given them in Cincinnati.

These festivals have always seemed to me the crowning achievement in Mr. Thomas's career. In the seventeenth of the series the combined Cincinnati and Pittsburg orchestras played under the direction of Mr. Van der Stucken, but the result was not satisfactory. The quality which Mr. Thomas secured with his own orchestra was lacking, and there was an evident want of homogeneity. This year (1908) the Theodore Thomas orchestra resumed its old position under its capable young leader, Mr. Stock, and the old standard set by Mr. Thomas was maintained. Cincinnati has every reason to be proud of its May festivals and the great influence they have had upon musical progress in the Middle West.

The Chicago May festivals of 1882 and 1884 were the outgrowth of these Cincinnati festivals. They had the same leader, the same solo artists, and the same orchestral material. The choruses were trained in each case by Mr. W. L. Tomlins, who at that time had a remarkable aptitude for that kind of work. The soloists for the 1882 festival were Madame Materna, Annie Louise Cary, Emily Winant, Aline Osgood, Sig. Campanini, and Messrs. Toedt, Remmertz, Henschel, Whitney, and Candidus. The principal works produced were

Beethoven's Fifth and Ninth symphonies, Mozart's Jupiter Symphony, selections from "Lohengrin," "Marriage of Figaro," "Euryanthe" and the "Niebelungen Trilogy," the "Messiah," Bach's cantata "Festo Ascensionis," Schumann's Mass in C Minor, and Berlioz's "Fall of Troy." The soloists for the second festival were Madame Materna, Christine Nilsson, Emma Juch, Emily Winant, Theodore J. Toedt, Franz Remmertz, Emil Scaria, Hermann Winkelmann, and Max Heinrich. The principal works performed were Mozart's Symphony in G Minor, Beethoven's Symphony No. 3, Schubert's Symphony in C, Haydn's "Creation," selections from "Tannhäuser," "Lohengrin," "Parsifal," and "Walküre," Berlioz's "Messe des Morts," Handel's "Dettingen Te Deum," and Gounod's "Redemption." It was a noble array of artists and of programmes for each festival, but the hopes of Mr. Thomas were not realized.

A May festival under the same direction was also given in New York in 1882. It was Mr. Thomas's ambition to give biennial festivals in New York and Chicago as well as in Cincinnati, utilizing the same material for each. The scheme was dropped in New York after the first festival, and in Chicago after the second. Cincinnati alone was able to continue them, even after their founder and master spirit had passed away. New York and Chicago are too large, too busy, too material for regular festivals devoted to the higher music. The atmosphere of Cincinnati is musical. It has always had musical pride and ambition, and now it has musical traditions and prestige which it evidently is determined not to sacrifice. The source of the festivals reaches

back to the old Sängerfests of the forties. It was the thought of Mrs. George Ward Nichols, whose love of art has also been shown in enduring ceramic forms, that inspired them, and it was Theodore Thomas's skill as organizer, programme maker, and conductor that infused the breath of life into them. The people of Cincinnati do not even yet know how greatly he prized these festivals or how great was the pang when he laid down the baton at the close of the festival of 1904, knowing that it was his last one.

CHAPTER XVI

EARLY DAYS — A PRELUDE

MARK BEAUBIEN'S FIDDLE — JEAN BAPTISTE'S PIANO — "THE MAN OF COLOR'S" ANNOUNCEMENT — MR. BOWERS'S ENTERTAINMENT — THE OLD SETTLERS' HARMONIC SOCIETY — FIRST ORGAN AND FIRST CHURCH CHOIR ROW — THE FIRST THEATRE — JOSEPH JEFFERSON'S FIRST APPEARANCE — THE OLD BALLADS — DEBUT OF RICHARD HOFFMAN — J. H. McVICKER IN SONG AND DANCE — DAVID KENNISON'S DONATION PARTY — MISCELLANEOUS CONCERTS IN 1850–1852

BEFORE recalling memories of purely local events in Chicago I must record the results of long and careful research among musty archives for the purpose not only of showing how the first settlers of the city amused themselves while engaged in the responsible task of laying its foundations, but also that succeeding events may follow in the proper chronological order. This should be of some interest, particularly because this early history of music has not been fully written hitherto, but only touched upon incidentally.

A year or two before the retirement of the Pottawattomies and Ottawas west of the Mississippi, the little village of six hundred residents, squatted among the sloughs near the mouth of the river, heard its first music in the strains of Mark Beaubien's fiddle in 1833. John Kinzie, senior, the first permanent white resident, who came here in 1804, was the proud possessor of a violin, but he never played it except in the privacy of his own

home.* Beaubien, however, may be called a public performer. He was the Lake Street ferryman, and also mine host of the Saguenash Tavern, which stood at the northeast corner of Lake and Market streets, upon the site of the "Wigwam" in which Abraham Lincoln was nominated for the presidency twenty-seven years later.† Beaubien, a French Canadian, was fond of fiddling, dancing, card-playing, story-telling, and was averse to race suicide, as is shown by his gift of sixteen children to the young city. He was also the entire orchestra for the dances which took place regularly in the Saguenash dining-room. His fiddle, now treasured by the Calumet old settlers' club, was reënforced by a piano, belonging to his brother, Jean Baptiste, the arrival of which by schooner was an exciting event in the village. In 1835 other pianos arrived, among them one brought by William Brooks from London, which was utilized for concerts a little later as an accompaniment for his songs by George Davis, the most prominent of the pioneer singers, and for solos by Mrs. Brooks, who executed the "Battle of Prague" with stunning effect at the first of these entertainments. The following unique advertisement, which appeared January 7, 1834, also shows that a member of the colored race was one of Chicago's early musicians.

"NOTICE — The subscriber begs leave to inform the inhabitants of Chicago and its vicinity that he will be ready at all

* The Kinsie house, which stood on the north bank of the river, near its mouth, was originally a log cabin, built in 1796 by Jean Baptiste Point au Sable. Mr. Kinsie reconstructed it.

† The Saguenash tavern was burned in 1851.

THE SAUGANASH TAVERN

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times to furnish music at assemblies, balls, and parties on as reasonable terms as can be furnished in this place.

WILSON P. PERRY (Man of color)."

The general manner in which the "man of color" refers to the citizens as "inhabitants" and to Chicago as "a place" shows its embryonic condition in 1834. The first sacred music was also heard in this year in a wooden tenement used as a church by all denominations, Sergeant Burtis of Fort Dearborn leading the singing. The first public entertainment at which admission was charged was given February 24, 1834, by one Mr. Bowers at the Mansion House, 84–86 Lake Street, the residence of Mr. Dexter Graves. Mr. Bowers, the pioneer showman, evidently had a sentimental strain in his character, for he prefaced his announcement as follows: "Joy hath its limits. We but borrow one hour of mirth from months of sorrow." He also had the conventional bombastic dignity of the showman, as shown by his advertising himself as "*Professeur de tours amusants.*" The French language always figured largely on the show bills of the early entertainers. I quote from his advertisement, which sets forth the alluring features of his performance:

"Mr. Bowers will fully personate Monsieur Chaubert, the celebrated fire king, who so much astonished the people of Europe, and go through his wonderful chemical performance. He will draw a red-hot iron across his tongue, hands, etc., and will partake of a comfortable warm supper by eating fire-balls, burning sealing-wax, live coals of fire, and melted lead. He will dip his fingers in melted lead and make use of a red-hot iron to convey the same to his mouth.

"Mr. Bowers will introduce many very amusing feats of ventriloquism and legerdemain, many of which are original and too numerous to mention. Admittance, 50 cents; children half price. Performance to commence at early candle-light. Seats will be reserved for ladies and every attention paid to the comfort and convenience of the spectators. Tickets to be had at the bar."

On the eleventh of June another ventriloquist and magician, Mr. Kenworthy, arrived and gave an exhibition at the Travellers' Home, but I can find no further allusion to it; and on the nineteenth one Mr. C. Blisse gave a concert. It must have been the first concert in Chicago, but unfortunately history is silent concerning it. The thousands of music teachers in Chicago to-day may be glad to know that the earliest pioneer was Miss Wythe, who opened a music school July 9, 1834.

Thus music secured something of a foothold in 1834. During the next year another music teacher, Samuel Lewis, opened a school, and as he also tuned pianos, it shows that these instruments were increasing in number. The great event of this year, however, was the organization of the Old Settlers' Harmonic Society, which gave its first concert, December 11, in the Presbyterian Church, southwest corner of Lake and Clark streets, which was the first church erected in Chicago. It was dedicated January 4, 1834. "The Chicago Magazine" of 1859 says of the new church:

"The approaches to this church when first built were of such a character as to test the zeal of church-goers at that time. On turning 'Doles' corner' from the east, or coming from the north, ferrying the river in a canoe, it was necessary

to traverse a miry pond or slough, after which came the daring feat of walking a round log to avoid the mire before reaching Dr. Goodhue's yellow house. By clinging affectionately to this fence the bridge of church benches was reached, which when passed landed the people on the steps of the sanctuary. Some of the upper ten in those days owned a horse and cart, and in this democratic conveyance, seated on buffalo robes, they were duly backed up and dumped on the doorstep dry-shod."

The officers of this society were B. W. Raymond, president; Benjamin Smith, secretary; T. B. Carter, treasurer; Seth P. Warren and C. A. Collier, directors; W. H. Brown and E. Smith, executive committee. No notice of this concert appears in the village paper, possibly because the attention of the editor, on the day of the concert, was engrossed with a race of Indian ponies on "the lake shore from Lake Street south to Twelfth Street," meaning probably Michigan Avenue, as the lake in those days came well up to the sidewalk.

I cannot find how long the Old Settlers' Harmonic Society lasted, but it gave a second concert in January, 1836. Nathan Dye, "Father Dye," as he used to be called, also came to Chicago in that year and looked the ground over with the intention of starting a music school. The prospect did not please him, however, and he went to Milwaukee, but he returned in 1848 and for twenty years was the most popular teacher in the city. His children's concerts were the rage, and many of the older citizens of Chicago to-day were among his pupils. The first regular quartette choir was organized at St. James's Church in 1836, and the first organ was also installed there. When the church itself was finished,

all the money that was left ($4000) was invested in a fine mahogany pulpit, and the organ fund had to be raised by subscription and the first "Ladies' Fair" held in Chicago. The volunteer choir was in dissension at once. Those who did not attend rehearsals regularly were dismissed. The whole congregation was in instant commotion. The director was urged to reinstate them, but being obstinate he refused. The rector took a hand in the fight and expostulated with the director, but to no purpose, and at last he left the singers to fight it out. The director was victorious, and thus ended Chicago's first church-choir row.

No event that year, however, created so much excitement as the arrival of the first circus, "The Boston Grand Equestrian Arena," Oscar Sloan, proprietor. The tent was spread on a lot near the foot of Madison Street, and the show was so well patronized that Sloan came again in a few months with the additional attraction of "two anacondas expressly purchased for this occasion."

The year 1837 should always be memorable in the dramatic annals of Chicago, for it was then that the first theatre was opened. Dean and McKenzie were the first applicants for a license, but the fee was fixed so high that they declined to pay it. There was considerable prejudice against theatres at that time. Subsequently Isherwood and McKenzie procured a license and gave performances in the dining-room of the Saguenash Tavern, "The Stranger" being the first play Chicago witnessed. Their success was so encouraging that they opened a regular theatre on the upper floor of a wooden tenement on the west side of Dearborn Street,

between Lake and South Water streets. It was christened "The Rialto," but the name was soon changed to "The Chicago Theatre." Joseph Jefferson's father was concerned in the management. It is a far cry back to those days, but the city's theatre of that time should be ever memorable, for Joseph Jefferson, a handsome lad of nine, was the singing actor of the troupe, which also included his father, mother, and sister. He often delighted audiences with comic songs, sea songs, and ballads, among them "Lord Lovell and Lady Nancy." One evening when William Warren, who had come on from Boston, appeared in "The Rivals," Jefferson sang a comic song between the comedy and the farce which convulsed his auditors almost as much as Warren's inimitable drollery had done. Jefferson little dreamed at that time that his own "Bob Acres" would be one of the most finished productions upon the American stage and that his name alone of all that stock company of 1837 would be known to fame.

The theatre was closed during the season of 1838 for some reason, but reopened in 1839 with young Jefferson still in the company, winning silver opinions from all; for in those days it was the custom of audiences to throw silver on the stage to singers and dancers, and Master Joseph, being a thrifty lad, accumulated quite a store of spending money by padding out the verses of his songs. This season is also memorable for the first spectacle Chicago had witnessed, "Cherry and Fair Star; or, The Children of Cyprus." The blossoming of the aloe, the moving waters, and "the splendid Grecian galley" called forth most enthusiastic encomiums from

the paper, after its first performance. It is curious in these days of *matinée* madness to note that the audiences were almost exclusively masculine. The prejudice against the theatre was very strong. Policemen were always in attendance to restrain rows between pit and gallery. Extempore criticism was often rude. The newspaper advised the ladies to stay away, but the manager reviled the editor, and used every inducement to secure their attendance. It was a hard struggle, but when Mr. Jefferson, senior, sent a card to the ladies with the intelligence that the ladies of Springfield attended the performances in that city and that theatre-going was all the rage among the New York ladies, our grandmothers turned out in full force, and were such a restraint that the police no longer had to keep order or to silence too vociferous criticism. It is also curious to note the demands which were made both upon actors and audiences as compared with the present day, when a single play may run a whole season. The season of 1839, for instance, began August 31 and closed November 2. During that time there were fifty-five performances and ninety-two different plays. What would actors think nowadays were they obliged to have a repertory ranging from tragedy to farce and from pantomime to spectacle? And what would the audiences of to-day think if they were expected to sit through performances of "Fazio" and the "Taming of the Shrew" one evening, "Romeo and Juliet" and the "Taming of the Shrew" the next evening, and a few nights later "Macbeth" and a three-act comedy? Surely the times are changed.

In 1840 entertainments began to multiply. Lecturers, magicians, and singers came, art exhibitions were inaugurated, and Barnum brought the first minstrel troupe with Master Diamond, a thirteen-year-old delineator of negro characters, and one Jenkins, who personated Yankee eccentrics. The famous William H. Russell also made his first appearance and sang his descriptive songs and ballads. In 1841 Chicago heard its first street band, organized by Nicholas Burdell, expressly to help celebrate a Harrison demonstration in the presidential campaign. The town was also illuminated, and there was a barbecue on the prairie. The new band boasted five clarinets, three trombones, two key bugles, one piccolo, three concert horns, one valve trumpet, and one bass drum. The programme of a concert given at the City Saloon,* August 18, 1841, by John A. Still, contains some of the ballads which were favorites at that time, among them, "Here 's a Health to thee, Mary," "The Charm has departed," "My Bark is on the Billow," "Poor Bessie," "Near the Lake where drooped the Willow," "Gentle Zitella," "The Fairy Tempter," and others. But where are the songs of yester year? In 1842 the Chicago Sacred Musical Society, C. A. Collier conductor, was organized, but its life was brief. A new theatre was also opened in the Chapin Building, southeast corner of Wells and Randolph streets, under the management of J. S. Hastings. In 1844 Chicago's first museum was opened in the Commercial Building, 73 Lake Street. Musical doings at the First Unitarian

* The City Saloon was not a drinking resort, but a hall for public gatherings, at the southwest corner of Lake and Clark streets.

Church in the same year are of special interest, as several young persons participated in them who afterwards became leading merchants. Rev. Joseph Harrington, the pastor, raised a fund for the purchase of an organ and trained the choir himself. At the dedication of the church a concert was given. Mrs. Harrington was the soprano; Miss Griswold, contralto; George Davis, barytone; Henry Tucker, tenor; William Larrabee and Lyman Beecher, bassos; Botsford and A. H. Burley, flutists; Charles Collier, violinist; and A. G. Burley, 'cellist. The Choral Union was organized in 1846, and though it lasted but two years, had three leaders, J. Johnson, S. P. Warner, and J. A. Hoisington.

The principal events of 1847 were the organization of the Mozart Society and the opening of Rice's Theatre. The Mozart Society was directed by Frank Lumbard, who in the same year was appointed vocal teacher in the public schools, a position which he held until 1853. He and his brother Jules were the best known local singers of the time and prominent figures in all musical events. John B. Rice, subsequently Mayor of the city, opened Rice's Theatre at 84–86 Randolph Street, June 28 of that year, with Dan Marble in "Black-Eyed Susan," the season closing November 28 with the comedy of "Rent Day," the farce "Used Up," and "The Star-Spangled Banner" sung by the whole company. The early settlers were very patriotic, and knew all the patriotic songs and ballads which some of their descendants have heard of. The five men who did much for music in those days were Frank Lumbard, George Davis, and Samuel Johnston, all good singers, B. August Bode,

pianist and teacher, and Sig. Martinez, a teacher of the violin and guitar, who delighted and surprised his audience at one of his concerts by playing two guitars and a violin at the same time. His advertisement reads:

"Signor Martinez' concert at the Court House — Songs by a young lady — Signor Martinez will hold a guitar in each hand and perform a duet on the violin, Ole Bull's 'Cataract of Niagara' and three fandangos — Court House to be brilliantly illuminated."

An interesting event in 1848 was the debut of Richard Hoffman, the first great pianist to visit Chicago. He gave a concert at the Court House, assisted by Joseph Burke, at that time advertised as "Master Burke, the infant phenomenon of the Shakesperean drama." Mr. Hoffman subsequently played with Jenny Lind in her concerts, also with Gottschalk and Von Bülow. The singing families also begin to appear in the same year, among them the Berger, Peake, Seguin, and Hutchinson "Tribe of Jesse from the old Granite State," whose songs rendered such great service to the anti-slavery movement. Some notable actors also appeared at the theatres for the first time, among them Julia Dean, Forrest, Booth, and McVicker. Those who recall the dignified and serious manager of McVicker's Theatre in his later days will hardly believe that in 1848 he was the singing and dancing comedian at Rice's Theatre. Joseph Jefferson was Chicago's first song and dance man, J. H. McVicker the second, *par nobile fratrum*. There is a touch of pathos in one of the closing events of the year. David Kennison, the last survivor of the

Boston Tea Party, in his one hundred and twelfth year opened a museum, but it proved an unfortunate enterprise. The old veteran, being in great want, announced a donation party for his birthday, November 17. In his card to the public he says: "I have fought in several battles for my country and have suffered more than any other man will have to suffer, I hope. I would not go through the wars again and suffer what I have for ten worlds like this." The poor old man did not make much out of his donation party, died the same year, and was buried in the city cemetery, now Lincoln Park. A boulder stands in the park indicating that the centenarian was buried somewhere in its vicinity, but no one knows just where he rests. But "after life's fitful fever he sleeps well" and suffers no more.

There was not much doing in 1849. The old McKenzie and Jefferson Theatre burned and a Museum of curios and "art wonders" was opened by Mr. Buckley on Lake between State and Dearborn streets. Conrad Charles Reisinger, however, livened matters up with a unique concert at the City Hall, when he played "the Grand Carnival of Milan, acknowledged by Ole Bull to be the most difficult piece ever written for the violin"; a fantasie, "Norma," upon one string; the "Grand Carnival of America"; selections from his opera of "Susan and Yankee Doodle"; concluding with a violin solo, played lying on his back, imitating flutes and birds.

In 1850 music takes a dignified place in Chicago history, the most important events being the organization of the first Philharmonic Society and the performance of the first opera, both of which I shall discuss in

subsequent chapters. The minor events were visits by various minstrel troupes, among them the Alleghanians, Baker Family, the Columbians, Campanologians, and the Ethiopian Serenaders. In the latter troupe one Mr. Price introduced the concertina, "a new instrument, the first in any band, said by musical critics to be the *ne plus ultra* of Ethiopian instruments." Signor Blitz delighted the ladies and children with his ventriloquism and trained canaries. The first vocal quartette, Messrs. Davis, Dunham, Frank Lumbard, and Miss Mary Nowlin, was organized and gave concerts. The Germans entered the field with the German Song Union, the forerunner of many *Männerchors*. One Mrs. Stewart grandiosely advertised a concert, announcing herself as a member of the Boston Handel and Haydn Society, also affirming that she would imitate a *cornet-à-pistons* as performed in Boston by Count de la Porte of Paris. The old settlers, however, were not interested in the Handel and Haydn Society, or the female gramaphone, or the French count, and the lady left town next day.

In 1851 many families and minstrel troupes gave concerts, among them the Blakely family, Kelmiste family, Hutchinson family, the Albions, Gray's Ethiopian Warblers, Kunkel's Nightingales, and the Druid Players, who performed upon seventy ox-horns. Dempster, one of the finest of ballad-singers, Anne Bishop, of whom mention is made in a preceding chapter, and Ignatz Krauz also gave concerts. The latter was a Hungarian singer who announced eighteen national melodies in fourteen languages. As this concert, however, was thinly attended, he tried to recoup himself by offering six

hundred and fifty tickets with a chance in forty prizes of jewelry and shawls, and thus inaugurated the gift concert scheme, which became very popular a few years later. In 1853 and 1854 musical interest in Chicago centred in the Philharmonic concerts and operatic beginnings, which brings me to my own early days in Chicago and closes this prelude.

CHAPTER XVII

EARLY OPERA IN CHICAGO

THE FIRST OPERA — SONNAMBULA AT RICE'S THEATRE — BURNING OF THE THEATRE — THE ARTISTS' ASSOCIATION — OPERA AT McVICKER'S THEATRE — THE FIRST ITALIAN TROUPE — GREAT ENTHUSIASM — A MISHAP AT NORTH'S AMPHITHEATRE — OPERATIC RIVALRY IN 1860 — THE WAR PERIOD — THE GRAU TROUPES — SOME HOME CONCERTS — THE FIRST GERMAN TROUPE — GRAU'S TROUPE OF MEDIOCRITIES

ON Monday, July 29, 1850, there was great excitement among the thirty thousand people of Chicago, for the first opera troupe was in town, and a performance of "Sonnambula" was announced for that evening in Rice's Theatre. It was a very small troupe and travelled very light. The artists, three or four in number, had come from Milwaukee some days previously by vessel. Having no orchestra of their own, the theatre band was engaged, and some of the theatre people and a few local singers undertook to perform one or two choruses. The cast included Elise Brienti as Amina; Mr. Manvers as Elvino; and Mr. Giubetti as Count Rodolfo. The theatre was crowded. The ladies were out in full force, dressed in the prevailing circumference of style at that time, and those belonging to the swell set were distinguished by their lorgnettes. Most of the gentlemen were dressed in faultless evening suits, for the swallow-tail was an everyday

coat in those days. The front rows were filled with "leading citizens," who were very enthusiastic. Frank Lumbard, an honest claqueur, led the applause with his sonorous "Well! Well!" when his critical taste was satisfied. The "opry" was all the talk on the next day, and the theatre was crowded again on the second evening. The first act passed off finely, and the duet, "O mio dolor," in which Amina protests her innocence, was heartily applauded. The ovation, however, was reserved for the charming villagers, Chicago villagers, as they tiptoed into the Count's apartment. The curtain rose for the second act and Elvino was just bemoaning his sad lot in his tenor aria when street cries of fire were audible and a sudden glare reddened the windows. A small building adjacent had taken fire, and the flames almost instantly spread to the theatre, which was a wooden tenement. There was no panic, however. Mr. Rice, the manager, came to the footlights, assured the audience that they had ample time to leave the theatre, and smilingly remarked, "Of course you know that I would not permit any one to be injured in my theatre." The people took him at his word, passed quietly out, and watched its destruction. In half an hour it was a heap of ashes and rubbish. Thus ended Chicago's first opera season. What became of the little troupe history does not relate. It is usually stated that the fire occurred on the opening night, but Mr. J. H. McVicker once told me that it was on the second night, and as he was an enthusiastic member of the home chorus, "singing as if he were the whole show so that the audience might be sure to hear him," he should be good authority.

Mr. Rice soon built another theatre, and pending its construction the large dancing-hall of the Tremont House was fitted up for entertainments and christened Tremont Hall. It was there that Adelina Patti made her first appearance, as has already been stated, though before that she sang privately in the dining-room of the same hotel and was remunerated by the guests with dolls, candy, or canary birds, her three grand juvenile passions. In 1853 a troupe with the pretentious name of "The Artists' Association" came from New York, heralded as follows by its manager:

"The undersigned, acting in the name and in behalf of Madame De Vries and Signor Arditi, known by the name and style of the Artists' Association, has the honor of calling the attention of the musical community and of the citizens of Chicago in general to the fact that he has made arrangements with Mr. Rice, the manager, to have the Italian Opera Troupe on Thursday evening, October 27, at the Chicago Theatre to perform the opera, in three acts, of "Lucia di Lammermoor." The undersigned begs leave to introduce the following artists: The grand prima donna, Signorina R. De Vries; the favorite tenor, Signor Pozzolini; the tenor, Signor Arnoldi; the comprimaria, Madame Sidenbourg, late of Madame Albani's troupe; the unrivalled barytone, Signor Taffanelli, and the eminent basso, Signor Colletti. Also a grand and efficient chorus and grand orchestra. This great company numbers over forty members, the whole under the most able direction of the distinguished maestro, Signor Arditi.

"G. POGLIANI."

"The distinguished maestro Arditi" was palmed off upon a guileless community which knew not one Arditi from another. The season lasted from October 27 to November 7, and the three operas performed were

"Sonnambula," "Norma," and "Lucia." I have only the cast of "Lucia," which was as follows: Lucia, Rosa de Vries; Edgardo, Pozzolini; Sir Henry Ashton, Taffanelli; Lord Arthur, Bouchsland. The season closed with a performance of Rossini's "Stabat Mater," which inaugurated the practice of giving the "Stabat" for a closing piece, followed by Italian troupes for several years. It infused the season with a certain odor of sanctity, although it is sacred music written in purely operatic style.

It was five long years before Chicago heard opera again. In the meantime Mr. McVicker had built a theatre on the site of the present "McVicker's," and in this new structure the Durand English Opera Troupe, comprising Rosalie Durand, soprano, Miss King, alto, Frederick Lyster, basso, and Georgia Hodson, tenor, gave performances during the week beginning September 27, 1858. The novel feature of the season was a lady singing all the tenor roles. It was in this theatre, the following year, that grand opera was given for the first time, attended by the fashion and the chivalry of the city. When it is remembered that Italian opera was inaugurated by the Garcia troupe in New York as early as 1825, and that New Orleans had regular seasons even before that time, it may seem that opera was a long time in reaching Chicago; but in 1825 there were many more Indians than white men here, and when New Orleans was enjoying its regular seasons of opera there were hardly half a dozen whites outside the walls of Fort Dearborn. Notwithstanding Chicago grew rapidly, even as late as the fifties it was considered by Eastern people as a place

in the far West, occupying a region still populated with Indians, buffaloes, and coyotes. The first Italian troupe, however, met with such success in its season, beginning February 22, 1859, that others rapidly followed it. The first troupe included Teresa Parodi, Amalia Patti, Cora Wilhorst, who belonged to a wealthy New York family, Pauline Colson, Henry Squires, who died in Iowa last year at an advanced age, Brignoli, the elder Amodio, Junca, Nicolo, and Ettore Barili, Adelina Patti's brother, and Maurice Strakosch, conductor. The troupe gave fifteen performances of operas new to Chicago, including "Lucrezia Borgia," "Traviata," "I Puritani," "Rigoletto," "Il Trovatore," "Martha," "La Favorita," "Don Giovanni," "Maritana," "Ernani," and "Il Poliuto." The season closed with an extra performance, March 11, for the benefit of Strakosch, the theatre company appearing in the comedy "Speed the Plough," and the opera company in acts from "La Traviata" and "The Barber of Seville." The two favorites were "Il Trovatore" and "Martha," and the two favorite singers were Colson and Brignoli. If a referendum had been taken, I think "Martha" would have polled the larger vote. The audience lustily applauded Brignoli's silvery singing of the tuneful lays of Manrico in "Il Trovatore," and did not care much for Parodi or Amalia Patti in the same opera; while in "Martha" they heard not only Brignoli, but the pretty and vivacious Colson and airs which were still more tuneful. When Colson sang "The Last Rose of Summer" and kissed her rose directly at the people, they simply went frantic, and kept her singing it until she was nearly exhausted,

not to mention Brignoli's patience. This enthusiasm is not to be wondered at. Remember, it was the first season of real opera. The orange had not been squeezed. Full dress was not imperative. Seats were not five dollars each. Opera was something new and fresh, and people were still in the tune stage. They had not heard then of music dramas, motifs, the dramatic recitative opera, or music of the future. They lived in the days of operatic Arcadia, where melody was born and where the art of *bel canto* still lives. Consequently they adored "Martha." Indeed it would be hard even in these days to make a cast which would equal that of almost fifty years ago, — Martha, Colson; Nancy, Amalia Patti; Lionel, Brignoli; Plunket, Junca; Tristan, Nicola.

The Cooper English Opera Troupe came in the following April and gave several performances at North's Amphitheatre, a huge barn-like structure on Monroe Street, where the Ravels gave their inimitable pantomime for the first time and the first calliope was heard. The mention of this theatre recalls the memory of a ludicrous personal mishap. I was anxious to write up the ingenious tricks and trap work used by François Ravel, the Harlequin of the troupe, and was invited behind during performance. The drop curtain, containing an aperture just large enough to allow Harlequin to make a horizontal dive through it, was down, and François in front, amusing the audience. As the manager and I were crossing the stage I was exactly opposite the aperture when Harlequin made his plunge. His head struck me amidships with such force that I was bowled

over, while he bounded back, and wildly clutching in all directions with legs and arms, at last dropped upon the stage in full view of the convulsed audience. I retired from the field satisfied with that piece of Harlequin's machinery and without stopping to listen to his Gallic expletives. The Cooper troupe included Anna Milner, Lucy Estcott, Brookhouse Bowler, Aynesley Cook, Rudolphsen, and Miss Duckworth. The last named was a chorus singer, but I have named her with the principals because later she took a leading contralto position on the Italian stage under the name of Morensi. The troupe gave "Sonnambula," and "Lucia," and also performed "The Bohemian Girl" and "L'Elisir d'Amore" for the first time here. During the first week in the following December the town was in a fever of excitement over its first operatic war, for two companies were here at the same time, and a fierce rivalry ensued. An English opera troupe, including Lucy Estcott, Fannie Kemp, who afterwards married Bowler, Miranda, a very popular tenor, and Miss Duckworth, occupied McVicker's Theatre. This gave the English a great advantage at the very outset, as they had a well-equipped stage, while the Italian troupe had to make the best of a hall — the Metropolitan, which was on the northwest corner of Lasalle and Randolph streets. It was a fair troupe, including Parodi, Caroline Alaimo, Hattie Brown, Sbriglia, an excellent tenor, and Banti, basso, and the Metropolitan was an admirable concert-hall; but its stage was not very large, and it required considerable skill and ingenuity to secure operatic illusions. Under such disadvantages

the Italians gave "La Traviata," "Ernani," "Norma," "Il Trovatore," and "Poliuto." The English troupe not only gave "The Bohemian Girl," "Maritana," "Rob Roy," and "Guy Mannering," but boldly met the Italians on their own ground and produced "Il Trovatore," "Lucia," "Sonnambula," "Lucrezia Borgia," and "The Daughter of the Regiment." The struggle was fierce but brief, and ended in the rout of the Italians, who were very poorly managed.

Between 1861 and 1863 there was another operatic gap. It was war time, and the people of Chicago were too deeply engrossed with George F. Root's "Battle Cry of Freedom" and "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, the Boys are Marching" to listen either to Italian arias or English songs. The sweetest of prima donnas and the most tuneful of Italian tenors warbled in vain to people who would rather go to the Court House steps and hear the Lumbards and John Hubbard and Charley Smith sing the war songs. There were some incidental but poorly attended concerts, however, in 1861. One troupe, including Brignoli, Miss Hinckley, Susini, Mancusi, and Mollenhauer, produced operas like "Don Pasquale" and others which did not require a chorus and for which a piano was sufficient accompaniment, and Mollenhauer played 'cello solos. The performances were excellent but unremunerative. The troupe was here in April, and it will be remembered that it was in April, 1861, that Fort Sumter was surrendered after bombardment by the Confederate batteries. People were not in a mood for operatic concerts. But Chicago was not entirely destitute of musical events that year. Inez

Fabbri with her husband, Richard Mulder, "pianist and composer for her Majesty the Queen of Holland," and Abelli, the barytone, gave concerts in which Fabbri cut up all sorts of patriotic tricks. Cassie Matteson, the favorite local contralto, also gave concerts with Adams, the opera tenor, Jules Lumbard, and Sarah Tillinghast, the pianist, and the latter also gave a series of excellent organ recitals at St. Paul's Church. How many of Cassie Matteson's admirers, I wonder, attended her concert more than twenty years after this time, when she returned from her long wanderings in Australia and South Africa only to find how soon we are forgotten when we are gone? There was no opera in 1862, but Gilmore livened up people with his patriotic music and led his band most audaciously through the intricate mazes of the first movement of Berlioz's "Harold in Italy" symphony, Zoehler playing the viola solo part, which Junker used to play so admirably,—Junker of the Theodore Thomas orchestra, now teaching the young Japs musical ideas to shoot in far-off Tokyo. Gottschalk and Carlotta Patti also gave some enjoyable concerts with popular programmes, to which reference has been made in a previous chapter.

In 1863 Jacob Grau, thinking that the country was sufficiently safe to warrant an opera season, brought a troupe to McVicker's Theatre which included Lorini, better known as Virginia Whiting, Cordier, a charming little French soubrette, Morensi, Fanny Stockton, who died afterwards on the stage, Brignoli, Macaferri, Italianized from McAffery, the only Irish-Italian operatic tenor I can call to mind, Lotti, a tenor grazioso,

whose singing of "Meinen Engel, nenn' Ich mein" was a dream of beauty, Amodio the barytone, and Susini, basso. They gave us "Dinorah," "Sicilian Vespers," "Un Ballo en Maschera," "La Juive," and Rossini's "Moses in Egypt" for the first time. Opera, therefore, made a little progress in the third year of the war. Besides this season of opera, home talent was busy in 1863. Mrs. Bostwick, an admirable artist, Miss Dewey, Miss Ellsworth, M. Dochez, better known by his stage name of De Passio, an excellent barytone, who subsequently forsook the concert stage for the more lucrative wine business, Mr. Sabin, Mr. Phillips, William Lewis, the violinist, and Louis Staab, the pianist, joined hands in giving the Old Ladies' Home a benefit at Bryan Hall, which was dedicated in 1860 under the auspices of Hans Balatka, by Mrs. Bostwick, Louis Staab, De Passio, and Henri de Clerque, a finished violinist. The dedicatory poem for this occasion was written by Benjamin F. Taylor, whose poetical talent has never been fully recognized except by some versifiers who tried to steal his poems after he had passed away. Two or three of these poachers claimed the authorship of one of his finest poems beginning "There's a Beautiful Isle up the River of Time." I am glad that I can establish his authorship. I was associated with him in journalism and saw him write it one afternoon in the room we jointly occupied, and he read it to me for the first time that day. The choir of St. Mary's, the church at that time being located on the corner of Madison Street and Wabash Avenue, also gave concerts at which Miss Conkey, who as Mrs. Crosby is now well known as an

illustrator of Wagner, played the piano excellently, and it is refreshing to state that she was not a pupil of Liszt or Leschetizsky or any one else, being a self-made player. The local orchestra also appeared in prize concerts, at which pianos, sewing machines, albums, writing desks, watches, jewelry, and silver plate were distributed among the lucky ticket-holders.

In 1864 there were three operatic seasons. Grau gave two weeks of opera at McVicker's with a troupe including Vera Lorini, Cordier, Morensi, Castri, Fischer, Steffani, Tamaro, Morelli, Hartmann, Formes, Colletti, Barili, and Mancusi, and returned in May with the same company reinforced by Virginia Whiting and Amodio. This season is memorable for the first performance of Gounod's Faust, the cast of which was as follows: Marguerite, Vera Lorini; Siebel, Morensi; Martha, Fischer; Faust, Tamaro; Mephistopheles, Morelli; Valentin, Amodio; Wagner, Colletti. The Soldiers' March was played by the Light Guard Band, whose appearance was hailed with acclamations, for there was much civic pride in Chicago at that time. In July Adelaide Phillips headed a small troupe including Mancusi, Susini, Zapucci, Locatelli, and Brignoli, and gave "The Barber of Seville" and "Don Pasquale." Upon this occasion Brignoli, for the first and only time in his life, announced a "farewell to America." He returned many times thereafter, of course. He had merely caught the farewell fever and had it light.

Chicago made its banner record of opera in 1865. In January Leonard Grover brought the first thoroughly equipped German opera troupe and gave fifteen

performances at McVicker's. The troupe comprised Frederici, Johannsen, and Rotter, sopranos; Dziuba and Canissa, altos; Himmer, Habelman, and Tamaro, tenors; Theodore Formes, Graff, and Haimer, barytones; and Hermanns, Steinecke, and Urchs, bassos. It was a fine array of artists. "La Dame Blanche," "Der Freischütz," "Tannhäuser," "Fidelio," and "The Magic Flute" were presented for the first time. In December Grover gave his second season of German opera, with his troupe reconstructed as follows: Johanna Rotter and Bertha Johannsen, sopranos; Sophie Dziuba, Freda de Gebele, and Rose Cooke, altos; Habelman and Tamaro, tenors; Duschnitz, barytone; Steinecke, Herrmans, and Weinlich, bassos. It was not so strong a troupe as the first one, but it gave some excellent performances. It was during this year that the Crosby Opera House was dedicated — an event of such importance as to deserve a chapter to itself. Even conceding the superior adaptation of the present Auditorium to the production of opera, it is doubtful whether Chicago will ever have a more comfortable, convenient, and enjoyable audience-room or one with more perfect acoustics than Crosby's.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE CROSBY OPERA HOUSE

ITS CONSTRUCTION — A HIVE OF ART INDUSTRIES — DEDICATION IN 1865 — AN OVATION TO GENERALS GRANT AND SHERMAN — OPERA SEASONS — DEBUTS AND FIRST PERFORMANCES — THE LOTTERY — THE MYSTERIOUS MR. LEE — U. H. CROSBY LOSES THE HOUSE — NEW MANAGEMENT — GILMORE INAUGURATES THE CHARITY BALLS — A PERIOD OF DECADENCE — FROM OPERA TO VAUDEVILLE — REDECORATION — ITS DESTRUCTION IN THE GREAT FIRE — SUMMARY OF OPERATIC EVENTS

THE Crosby Opera House is a landmark in the musical history of Chicago. It was a veritable hive of artistic industries. In addition to the opera auditorium it housed a large art gallery and numerous studios of music teachers, painters, and sculptors. It was built by an enterprising Chicago citizen, Uranus H. Crosby. He devoted to its construction the fortune which he had made in commercial business, and he likewise sacrificed it all in some mysterious way in its management, before the house was a prey to the terrible fire of 1871.

The Crosby Opera House was located on the north side of Washington, midway between State and Dearborn streets, and it also included a music hall fronting on State Street. It was four stories in height and was built in the French style, common in public edifices at that time. The auditorium occupied the entire rear of

the building, and was divided into an orchestra, parquette, and dress circle on the main floor, a balcony with fifty-six elaborately decorated boxes in the centre, and a family circle. The proscenium circle was a single panel, upon which a copy of Guido Reni's "Aurora" was frescoed, with frescoes of Comedy and Tragedy to the right and left. There were also sunken panels in the ceiling containing portraits of composers. The decorations of the house were both rich and artistic. It was a model of comfort, convenience, beauty, and safety as well, for it was provided with exits both to Washington and State streets, egress from the upper tier to roofs of adjacent buildings, and there were automatic steam appliances for deluging the stage in case of accident. It was a combined opera house, art gallery, and home of arts and crafts, upon which money had been lavishly expended and of which Chicago was very proud. It was just such a structure as Chicago needs to-day.

The opera house was completed in 1865, and its inauguration was announced for April 17 of that year, but, on account of the assassination of President Lincoln, it was postponed until April 20. Upon that evening the house was densely crowded with one of the most brilliant audiences ever assembled in Chicago. Jacob Grau, deeply impressed with the importance of the occasion as well as with his own personal relation to it, had brought a troupe of excellent artists, including Zucchi and Clara Louise Kellogg, sopranos; Morensi, Fischer, and Zapucci, altos; Massimiliani, Mazzoleni, and Lotti, tenors; Bellini, Orlandini, Lorini, and

CROSBY'S OPERA HOUSE, CHICAGO, IN 1871

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Dubreul, barytones; and Susini, Colletti, Muller, Perni, and Ximenes, bassos. The veteran Carl Bergmann wielded the baton. George C. Bates, a prominent lawyer and flowery speaker of those days, delivered a brief and ornate address, and a poem was read by W. B. C. Hosmer. After these preliminary exercises "Il Trovatore" was performed with the following cast: Leonora, Zucchi; Azucena, Morensi; Manrico, Massimiliani; Count Di Luna, Bellini; Fernando, Coletti. The repertory for the rest of the season was as follows: April 21, "Lucia," with Kellogg and Massimiliani; April 22, "Il Trovatore"; April 24, "Il Poliuto"; April 25, "Martha"; April 26, "Norma"; April 27, "Faust"; April 28, "Linda"; April 29, "Norma"; May 3,* "Sonnambula"; May 4, "I Puritani"; May 5, "Un Ballo en Maschera;" May 6, "Linda"; May 7, "Don Sebastian" (first time); May 9, "Don Sebastian"; May 10, "Faust"; May 11, "Lucrezia Borgia"; May 12, "Martha"; May 13, "Un Ballo en Maschera"; May 15, "Ernani"; May 16, "Don Giovanni"; May 17, "Fra Diavolo" (first time); May 18, "Don Sebastian"; May 19, "Fra Diavolo"; May 20, closing performance, "Sonnambula," and the last act of "Lucia di Lammermoor." It was a record-breaking season for J. Grau. The first concert in the new opera house was given May 25, under the management of Max Strakosch, by Mademoiselle Behrens, soprano; Wehli, the "left-hander," pianist; and Hélène de Katow, one of the

* There were no performances the first and second of May, owing to the civic reception of the body of Lincoln on the way to its last resting-place in Springfield, Illinois.

feminine artists who have had the courage to master the 'cello and utilize it as a solo instrument. I particularly remember her refined playing of Offenbach's "Musette" and the Servais fantasia on themes from "The Daughter of the Regiment," and who of those who heard it is likely to forget Wehli's lightning left-handed performance of his own fantasia on themes from "Lucia"? It was a freak exhibition, to be sure, but it was excusable, for it always seemed to me that Wehli played better with one hand than with two. On the thirty-first another concert was given, this time by the Germania Männerchor for the benefit of the Northwestern Sanitary Fair, the memorable feature of which was Hummel's "Military Septet," in which Paul Becker played the piano part, the other six parts being taken by members of the Musicians' Union. On June 5 Grau returned with the same troupe and gave a second season, which closed June 20. The memorable features of this season were the first performance of Verdi's "Sicilian Vespers," in which Zucchi, Mazzoleni, and Bellini had the principal parts, and a performance of "The Daughter of the Regiment" in honor of Lieutenant General Grant and Major General Sherman, who were in attendance by invitation of the management and as guests of the city, for "war's stern alarums had changed to merry meetings, its dreadful marches to delightful measures." The cast for this gala occasion was as follows: Marie, Clara Louise Kellogg; Marchioness, Madame Fischer; Tonio, Lotti; Sulpizio, Susini; Hortenzius, Muller; Cartouche, Locatelli. The generals entered their box

together, amid rousing cheers, orchestral fanfares, followed by the national anthem, the waving of flags, and flutter of handkerchiefs. General Grant acknowledged the ovation in his customary quiet manner, but General Sherman, who was fond of being lionized, was more effusive in his recognition. It is only truth to say that neither of the war heroes seemed to be very deeply engrossed with the doings of the vivandiere and her companions until the "Rataplan" was sung. Both of them rose to the occasion as Kellogg briskly directed the drum song straight at them. Perhaps it aroused memories of the scenes in camp and field through which they had so lately passed. I do not think either of them cared greatly for music. If General Grant did, he had no way of showing it. Perhaps, like Nietzsche, he wanted to express delight but did n't know how. As for General Sherman, I saw him once at a Cincinnati Festival pretending to listen to the Beethoven Choral Symphony, the very picture of distress and wanting to get away. Verdi's "La Forza del Destino" was also given in this season, June 13, for the first time in this country, and Grau boasted that it was produced in Chicago even before it was heard in Paris or London. He did not say, however, that the opera was not a drawing card, which might have accounted for French and English indifference.

On November 8 Grau brought another Italian troupe to the opera house and gave a season which closed December 1. With one or two exceptions it was a heterogeneous collection of mediocrities gathered from everywhere, including No Man's Land. The most

remarkable thing about them was their picturesque nomenclature. Those announced for "the first time in America" were Leonilda Boschetti, Olga Olgini, Mureo Celli, and Signors Anastasi, Brandini, Milleri, and Fellini. Other unknowns were Noel Guidi, Cash Pollini, Signora Magra, Mademoiselle Manfred, and Signor Laporte. The only ones known to the public were Gazzaniga, Coletti, Orlandini, Lotti, Tamaro, and Lucy Simons, who made her debut, November 21, as Adina in "L'Elisir d'Amore." At the close of the season away went these extraordinary songbirds, but, as in the case of Schumann's gypsies, "who can tell where?" The indefatigable Grau, however, turned up again in 1866 and brought out "L'Africaine" June 17, for the first time, with the following cast: Selika, Gazzaniga; Inez, Boschetti; Vasco, Musiani; Nelusko, Orlandini; Don Pedro, Milleri. The performance was mediocre, but being a novelty, it drew crowds. In May of the same year Madame Ghioni and Susini came with a scratch company for a short season, of which I recall only the first production of "Crispino e la Comare" and Canissa's charming singing and acting of the part of Annetta. It is curious that this delightful little opera, after slumbering for nearly half a century, was revived last season in New York. There are many other slumbering little operas, both French and German, which might be revived and would prove most grateful substitutes for the tiresome dramatic recitative works which are now forced upon an unwilling public. After concerts by members of Grover's old German company and the charming Bateman concerts in which Parepa,

Brignoli, Ferranti, Mills the pianist, and Carl Rosa appeared, an opera season of fifteen nights began December 24 in which Max Strakosch presented Madame Ghioni, Madame Patti-Strakosch, Mademoiselle Canissa, Madame Zapucci, the tenors Irfre and Errani, the barytones Marra, Locatelli, Sarti, and Parozzi, and the bassos Susini, Coletti, Ximenes, and Massio. The star of the troupe was Ettore Irfre, the tenor. He appeared in "Il Trovatore," "L'Africaine," "Fra Diavolo," "Ernani," "Un Ballo en Maschera," "Robert the Devil," and "Lucia di Lammermoor." He was a tenor of the grand style, with a rich, powerful voice and the genuine Italian method. No one, I feel sure, who heard his glorious voice in the "Lucia" sextet will ever forget Irfre. In the early part of 1867 Maretzek gave a season of opera in which Minnie Hauck made her first appearance, as well as the veteran buffo Ronconi. He also brought out for the first time "Star of the North," "Zampa," and Petrella's "Carnival of Venice." The La Grange-Brignoli combination gave some concerts, but apart from these two artists the troupe was an inferior one. In October La Grange and Brignoli came again, this time with a small opera company, their leading people being Adelaide Phillips, Miss McCulloch, Massimiliani, Randolfi, Marra, Susini, Coletti, and Sarti. The season closed November 9, and the repertory consisted of the old stock Italian operas. Immediately following them came the Mendelssohn Quintette Club of Boston, as it was first organized, including Wilhelm Schultze, first violin, Carl Meisel, second violin, Thomas Ryan, viola and clarinet,

Edward M. Heindl, flute, and Wulf Fries, 'cello. They were the best chamber music players of the day, occupying the same position then that the Kneisel Quartette does to-day.

A memorable and mysterious occurrence, in which the Crosby Opera House was involved, happened the same year. It was generally believed that the house had been enriching its enterprising young proprietor, but it was suddenly apparent that it had been slowly but surely dragging him to the verge of bankruptcy. He had spent money extravagantly. Knowing little about the details of the operatic business, he was at the mercy of managers. He was generous to a fault, and undoubtedly his generosity had been abused more than once during the two years which had elapsed since the brilliant inauguration night. To save himself, he resorted to a lottery scheme in which the opera house was the capital prize. It was advertised all over the country at a time when lotteries and gift enterprises were very popular. Besides the house itself, a large number of excellent paintings and minor prizes were offered, and a chromo was sent to each ticket-holder. This accounts for the profusion of copies of Huntington's "Mercy's Dream," which may still be found hanging on parlor walls all over the Western prairies — the only souvenirs of the great lottery which made such a sensation January 23, 1867. On that day thousands crowded into the Crosby Opera House, each one hoping to be its proprietor when he went out. There were two hundred and ten thousand numbers, but a considerable bunch of them was held out by Mr. Crosby as

undisposed chances. A committee of well-known citizens had charge of the drawing, and Mr. W. F. Coolbaugh, the banker, who afterwards ended his life so sadly at the base of the Douglas monument, was the chairman. The owner of the winning ticket was not among the thousands in attendance. He was not a citizen of Chicago. After a day had passed sceptics began to declare he was a myth. It was several days before he was discovered and identified as one A. H. Lee of Prairie du Rocher, Illinois. The air was at once full of wild stories. Some declared there was no such person. A report came from Prairie du Rocher of nocturnal visitants who arrived at his home with the news of his good fortune and of the dazed condition of Lee as he met the night-riders in his night-dress and contemplated the vision of dazzling wealth which had so suddenly showered upon him. As time passed, the mystery grew. There were stories that Lee sold it back to U. H. Crosby for $200,000. The veil of mystery grew still denser when it was discovered shortly that U. H. Crosby had retired from the gay world in which he had cut so conspicuous a figure and gone to a quiet New England village (where he ended his days), and that the house had passed into the possession of his brother Albert. It is useless to try to remove the veil. It is sufficient to know that the Crosby Opera House continued under the management of Albert Crosby, but its career was blemished after it had been dragged through the lottery. There was "a blot on the 'scutcheon."

The new manager sought to reëstablish the Opera House in public favor, and give it social distinction

by importing Gilmore, who brought his band, and with it Camilla Urso, Mrs. H. M. Smith the Boston soprano, Arbuckle the cornetist, and Dr. Guilmette the oratorio basso. Promenade concerts were given several evenings, and the charity balls, which have cut such a figure in fashionable life ever since, were inaugurated. There was another gleam of hope that the house might reclaim its artistic status when the combined forces of Maretzek and Grover appeared in February for a season of Italian and German opera. The two impresarios brought with them Mesdames Kapp–Young, Gazzaniga, Minnie Hauck, Antoinetta Ronconi, Natali Testa, Frederica Ricardi, and Signors Pancani, Baragli, Giorgio Ronconi, Bellini, Antonucci, Enrico Testa, Barili, Banfi, Ricardo, Dubreul, Hermanns, and Habelman. Maretzek conducted the Italian, and Carl Bergmann the German contingent. The season lasted one week, and "Romeo and Juliet" was the principal feature, with Minnie Hauck as Juliet and Pancani as Romeo. In March the skies brightened once more. The Richings opera troupe appeared in the favorite old English operas with Caroline Richings, Zelda Seguin, Campbell, Castle, Seguin, J. G. Peakes, Henry Peakes, and Pierre Bernard in the principal roles. Eichberg's pretty little opera, "The Doctor of Alcantara," "Cinderella," and Benedict's "Lily of Killarney" were the novelties. Opera bouffe followed in April, introducing the Lambelé troupe, to which I have referred in a previous chapter. In May the La Grange–Brignoli combination gave a single concert and a performance of "Don Pasquale." After the summer vacation Bateman

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THOMAS WHIFFEN
As Sir Joseph Porter

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brought the Tostée opera bouffe company, and in September Maretzek appeared with another combination of Italians and Germans, including Agatha States, Louise Durand, Johanna Rotter, Miss McCulloch, Rosa Cellini, Jennie Appel, Brignoli, Habelman, Macafferi, Ronconi, Hermanns, and Antonucci, the season closing October 17. The repertory was a curious conglomerate, "Martha," "Fidelio," "Ernani," "Don Giovanni," "Fra Diavolo," "Robert the Devil," "Der Freischütz," "Masked Ball," and "Crispino," following each other in regular succession. In October, however, Crosby Opera House took a downward slant when the spectacular "Humpty-Dumpty" was produced, and "all the king's horses and all the king's men" were not able to put it together again. In November the Richings-Bernard Troupe (Miss Richings was at this time Mrs. Bernard) reappeared with the old troupe, but produced nothing new except "Il Trovatore" and "La Traviata" in English.

In 1869 Crosby Opera House strayed far afield from the purposes to which it was dedicated four years previously. The programmes of that year show a curious medley of entertainments. Miss Kellogg's concert troupe, including Alida Topp, Herr von Kopta, and Signors Lotti and Petrella, were followed by "The Field of the Cloth of Gold," in which Mademoiselle Turnour, "queen of air," Alice Oates, Swiss bell-ringers, Leon Brothers the gymnasts, and other freaks appeared. Susan Galton's opera troupe, with Blanche Galton, Pyne Galton, "Tom" Whiffen, and others presented a series of delightful operettas. It is a pity these cannot be

reproduced, so that opera-goers of to-day might know how operettas should be given; but such artists as were in that troupe could hardly be found now. Nearly all of them were of the Pyne lineage, which means that they had preserved the traditions of English opera at its best. In April Alice Oates was frisking about in "Humpty-Dumpty" again. In May the Desclauzas' opera bouffe troupe was brought by Grau. In July the Peak Family appeared with bell-ringers, character personators, a female piccolo player, and casino singers — in a word, vaudeville, which was followed by a scratch Italian opera troupe. In September the Gregorys introduced trained animals, acrobats, and pantomimists, and late in the same month "Formosa, or the Railroad to Ruin," made such a success that it was speedily placed upon the boards at McVicker's Theatre and Wood's Museum, and was also given in black by Emerson's and Manning's Minstrels. An English opera troupe composed of some of the old Richings artists, reënforced by Parepa, Henri Drayton, and the charming little Rose Hersee, closed the year, Balfe's "Puritan's Daughter" being the only novelty.

The story of 1870 may be told briefly. Fox and Kiralfy pantomimes, the "Seven Sisters, or the Daughters of Satan on a visit to Chicago," another scratch opera troupe, made up of left-overs from the old troupes who were stranded and glad to catch at anything, the "Twelve Temptations," — owned by Colonel James Fisk, the gay cavalier, who always had a large stock of temptations on hand, and who finally succumbed to them and went, in his own phrase, "where

the woodbine twineth," — "Undine," "The Green Huntsman," "The Black Crook," "The White Fawn," and several other spectacles combining colors enough to outdo a rainbow, followed each other upon a stage dedicated to high art.

The next year (1871) opened with more of these glittering gewgaws, but in February the Crosby Opera House returned to its original uses. Maretzek made his annual appearance with a German troupe, including Lichtmay, Rossetti, Frederici, Bernard, Wilhelm Formes, Carl Formes, Himmer, Habelman, Vierling, and Franosch, and gave as a novelty "The Merry Wives of Windsor," with Carl Formes as Falstaff. Those who saw his fine personation of the fat knight are not likely soon to forget it. Summer days came, and the house was closed for repairs and redecoration. During the winter of 1870 Mr. Crosby had hesitated for some time whether to continue in the amusement business, and had even requested his architect to draw plans for changing the auditorium into commercial offices. The persuasion of friends, however, induced him to continue. A change into "something rich and strange" was promised. The autumn days came. They were hot and sere, and furious burning winds swept across the prairies. Week after week passed without rain. There were warning voices in prairie and forest fires, and the whole city experienced a feeling of depression and a presentiment of something terrible to happen. But the work upon the Opera House went on. Eighty thousand dollars was expended in seatings, upholstery, frescoing, and painting, in luxurious carpets, superb bronzes, and

costly mirrors. The evening of October 9 was set for the reopening of what was nearly a new Crosby Opera House. Theodore Thomas was to rededicate it to the higher music, with his incomparable orchestra. Marie Krebbs, the pianist, was to have been the solo artist. I regret that my programme for the opening night fell a prey to the impending disaster, but I remember that the announcements of the season which was to be and never was, included, among other numbers, Schubert's quartet in D minor, Schumann's First and Fourth symphonies, Beethoven's Third and Fifth, and concertos by Rubinstein, Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Littolf, Weber, Chopin, and Liszt, which Miss Krebbs was to have played. The work was concluded Saturday, October 7. I returned from my vacation that day and found upon my desk an invitation to see the Opera House lit up at seven-thirty the next evening. I was there at the appointed time, in company with others who were enthusiastic in their appreciation of the brilliant transformation which had been effected and over the seemingly brilliant prospects of the season of 1871–1872. Three or four hours later I saw Crosby Opera House lit up by the flames of the most destructive conflagration of modern times — a fire best described by the word which General Sherman used as a definition of war. The beautiful structure seemed to melt away. I saw it a little distance off, when it first burst out in flame. It did not seem to catch fire at any particular point. It was as if a huge wave of fire swept over and devoured it. When Theodore Thomas and his orchestra arrived the following morning, they

stopped at the Twenty-second Street Station of the Lake Shore Railroad. A burning city barred their nearer approach. A pile of smoking bricks, stones, and iron, one among thousands more of the same kind, strewn about in wild confusion, stood in the place of the beautiful auditorium where they were to have played. Crosby Opera House was no more! Gone with all its memories and associations and nights of pleasure! But the Opera House was not the only victim. Not a concert hall, theatre, museum, music school, or studio was left. Many of the musicians fled from the city, for they felt that music would be the last of the phœnix brood to rise from the ashes.

To enter into details of opera seasons after the fire, or to recall personal memories of artists connected with them, would involve repetition of facts already stated in personal sketches or mention of artists still upon the stage, which would be foreign to the scheme of these "Memories." In place of it I append a brief statement of the most important operatic events from the time of the fire to the dedication of the Auditorium, which may be valuable for reference:

1872. Debut of Wachtel at the Globe Theatre.
1873. (February) Maretzek Troupe. Debut of Lucca in "Favorita" and first performance of "Mignon"; Kellogg Troupe. Debut of Jennie van Zandt and Joseph Maas.
1874. Strakosch Troupe. Debuts of Nilsson, Cary, Campanini, Capoul, and Del Puente. First performance of "Aida."
1875. Strakosch Troupe. Debuts of Albani, Heilbron, and Tagliapietra. First performance of "Lohengrin" with Albani as Elsa.
1876. Strakosch Troupe. Debut of Madame Palmieri. First performance of "Semiramide."
1877. Pappenheim-Adams German Troupe.
1878. Strakosch Troupe. Debuts of Marie Rose, Litta, and Pantaleoni.
1879. Mapleson Troupe. Debuts of Gerster, Sinico, Lablache, Galassi,

and Foli. Strakosch Troupe. Debuts of Teresita Singer, Anna de Belocca, Petrovitch, and Castelmary.

1880. Mapleson Troupe. Debuts of Marimon, Ambré, and Valleria. International Company. Debuts of Laura Schirmer, Abbie Carrington, and Perugini. First performance of Boito's "Mephistopheles."

1881. Mapleson Troupe. Debut of Ravelli. Beauplan New Orleans Troupe. Debuts of Tournier, Utto, Jourdan, and Lablache.

1882. Mapleson Troupe. Debut of Emma Juch. Strakosch Troupe. Debuts of Bertha Ricci, Mancini, and George Sweet.

1883. Mapleson Troupe, with Patti. Debuts of Meirswinski and Scalchi.

1884. Abbey Troupe. Debuts of Sembrich and Fursch-Madi. First performance of "La Gioconda." Mapleson Troupe headed by Patti.

1885. Damrosch German Troupe. Debuts of Materna, Brandt, Schott, and Staudigl. First performance of Gluck's "Orpheus" and Wagner's "Die Walküre."

1886–1887. American Opera Troupe. First performance of "Queen of Sheba" and "Nero."

1889. Dedication of the Auditorium.

CHAPTER XIX

THE ORCHESTRA IN CHICAGO

JULIUS DYHRENFURTH'S STORY — IBACH'S "SHARP CORNER" — HOW THE FIRST ORCHESTRA WAS ORGANIZED — VARIOUS PHILHARMONIC SOCIETIES — CARL BERGMANN'S FAILURE — THE FIRST MASQUERADE — HENRY AHNER'S MELANCHOLY FATE — THE UNGER-MOZART RIVALRY — HANS BALATKA — THE PHILHARMONIC OF THE SIXTIES — ITS RISE AND FALL — THE PHILHARMONIC FUNERAL — EARLY CHAMBER MUSIC — A GLIMPSE AT THE SÄNGERFESTS — ADVENT OF THE THOMAS ORCHESTRA

IT is nearly forty years ago that Julius Dyhrenfurth told me the story of his wanderings, as we dined together at that cosy restaurant of Ibach's, at the "Sharp Corner," so famous in those days for its good dinners. Theodore Thomas, a connoisseur in matters of this kind, once said to me, "Ibach's is the only place I have found where you can order a dinner for a company without specifying the courses and know that everything will be satisfactory." Ibach's restaurant was an unpretending little place, homely within and without, where you were sure to find spotless linen, excellent service, dinners perfectly cooked, and the choicest wines of Ibach's own importation. It was a cheery Bohemian place, where you were always sure of meeting people whom you wanted to see. You were also very sure to meet Ibach at the door when you entered, and his old-fashioned practice of escorting you

to the door and sending a "Gute Nacht" after you when you left was agreeable. If you were well acquainted with him, he would also play the zither for you while you were at table. We have plenty of elegantly decorated restaurants and gilded *cafés* now, but memory goes back longingly now and then to Ibach's and to Billy Boyle's snug little retreat in the alley. The loss of these is one of the penalties imposed by the growth of municipal wealth and fashion.

It was over a bottle of Ibach's choicest Mosel that Dyhrenfurth told me his story. He left Germany in the thirties, with his fiddle as sole companion, to make his way in the world. In New York he made the acquaintance of another fellow-wanderer, one Joseph Hermanns, a pianist, and they travelled together, giving concerts in various Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia towns. Then they went South and played in New Orleans and other Southern cities. It is curious how many foreign musicians, as soon as they landed, went to the South in those early days. It apparently indicates that the South at that time offered a better field for musicians than the North. Dyhrenfurth did not make his fortune concertizing. On the contrary, the financial outlook was so gloomy that he went back to Germany in 1841. In a few years political affairs in Prussia became so unsettled and the revolutionary spirit so active, that he came back to the United States, and the year 1847 found him in Chicago. Being of a social nature, and hail fellow well met with every one, and violinists being scarce at that time, he and his fiddle were in frequent requisition. In the latter part of December of that year

he gave a concert, assisted by Bode, a pianist, and Signor Martinez, a guitar player of local celebrity, and thus was formally introduced to the musical world of the city. As concerts did not pay very well, he bought a little tract of land on the western outskirts of the city and started a truck garden. At that time many expatriated Germans were flocking to this country, and some of them came to Chicago. They were always welcome at the Dyhrenfurth home, and as nearly all of them could play some instrument, they were all the more welcome. They played and practised together, and at last Dyhrenfurth suggested that they organize a little orchestra and give some concerts in the city. Thus was Chicago's first orchestra born, and it was christened with the dignified name of "Philharmonic Society." On the fourth of September, 1850, the following advertisement appeared in "The Chicago Tribune":

"PHILHARMONIC SUBSCRIPTION CONCERT. Mr. Dyhrenfurth begs leave to inform the public and lovers of music that he proposes giving a series of eight concerts, one a week, if a sufficient number of subscribers can be found to insure the expenses. The performance will be on a larger scale than heretofore, embracing solos, orchestra, and chorus. Terms for eight concerts, $3.00. The ticket admits one lady and gentleman, with the privilege of one single ticket for 25c. Subscription tickets found at Burley & Co.'s bookstore."

The first concert was given October 24, 1850, upon the occasion of the dedication of Tremont Hall, the orchestra being assisted by George Davis, Frank Lumbard, and Dr. Dunham, vocalists. The programme included a potpourri, by the orchestra; a song, with

vocal quartette accompaniment; a violoncello solo, by Carlino Lenssen; the "Chicago Waltz," composed by Lenssen for the occasion and performed by the orchestra; a vocal trio, by Messrs. Davis, Lumbard, and Dunham; a medley overture of negro airs, and a chorus from Weber's "Preciosa." There was no regular criticism in the papers of 1850. Some friend who had attended the concerts would send in his impressions, and from one of these contributions I gather that the "Chicago Waltz" was the favorite. The writer indulges in the following rhapsodical flight:

"To our taste, the gem of the evening was the 'Chicago Waltz,' composed for the violoncello by Lenssen, with guitar accompaniment. It was soft, tender, lulling, wafting the listener as gently as gossamer is borne upon the breeze, and anon carrying him round and round and up and up in a spiral motion delightful to feel."

This reads like materialism run loose, but is it any more absurd than the materialism of the latest production of the genius of to-day? Is it more ridiculous than the "Symphonia Domestica" of Richard Strauss, in which with varied cacophony he narrates the day's experiences of his baby and the antics of the assembled relatives? The orchestra gave the series of eight concerts, as announced, and at the close all concerned were out of pocket, — an orchestral result which is not exceptional even to-day. Dyhrenfurth, however, was not discouraged. In the Fall of 1851 he was again in the field; and associating with himself Mr. Mould, the music dealer of those days, he gave two seasons of concerts, winding up with a grand concert and ball on New Year's Eve, at

Melodeon Hall. The ball was a brilliant success for those days. One paper says: "There were eighty couples present. The music was splendid. The orchestra was fine. About ten o'clock it was reënforced by the theatre orchestra, and the hours glided away upon a tide of harmony." The Dyhrenfurth orchestra at that time numbered twenty-two pieces. The names of the members of Chicago's first orchestra should be preserved, though all of them are now chiselled on gravestones. They were as follows: First violins, Dyhrenfurth, Geisler, and Buderbach; second violins, Hartnung, Pandbar, and Leder; violas, Salzman and Leder; 'cello, Palme; double basses, Schafer and Richter; trombone, Dean; flutes, Schmitz and Lungear; clarinets, Salzman and Weinman; bassoons, Ramociotti and Lutting; cymbals, Thompson; kettledrum, Faber. The subjoined programme of the concert and ball alluded to above shows a decided advance over that of the first concert.

PART I

1. Overture to "Zampa" . . . . . *Herold*
   ORCHESTRA
2. "Non tu sogni," from "I Lombardi" . . . . . *Verdi*
   MISS FANNY RAYMOND
3. Clarinet solo
   MR. RAMOCIOTTI
4. Potpourri from "Stradella" . . . . . *Flotow*
   ORCHESTRA
5. Piano solo, "La Cracovienne"
   MISS EMILY RAYMOND
6. Ballad, "Child of Earth"
   MISS FANNY RAYMOND
7. Champagne galop
   ORCHESTRA

PART II

Grand Promenade Concert and Dance, Dyhrenfurth, conductor, Dean, caller.

The concerts of 1850 and 1851 proved disastrous to Dyhrenfurth. During the next two years he made several efforts to recoup himself, but at last abandoned the attempt to give regular seasons of concerts. Other aspirants for orchestral fame and fortune appeared, but they did not fare much better. In 1852 another Philharmonic society was organized with G. P. Abell as conductor, but the outlook was so discouraging that he resigned in 1853 and was succeeded by Christopher Plagge. An effort was now made to place the Philharmonic Society on a substantial basis. Regular officers were elected and a board of directors appointed. Application was made to the Legislature for an act of incorporation. The petition was excitedly discussed by the Solons at Springfield. There was the same rural jealousy of Chicago which exists at the present day, and some of the farmers were not quite certain that ulterior and perhaps dangerous motives were not lurking behind that mysterious word "Philharmonic." At last, however, they were convinced that the society had no intention of setting the prairies on fire, and somewhat reluctantly granted the incorporation, but expressed their contempt for such municipal triviality by entitling it "an act to encourage the science of fiddling." Plagge did not last long, and the fiddlers themselves found little pecuniary compensation in the new dignity of incorporation.

In 1854 Plagge was succeeded by a great musician. Carl Bergmann came to Chicago from New York with the intention of making his home here. He advertised for pupils, and the directors of the Society, who were

acquainted with his reputation in the East, tendered him the conductorship. He took the baton with high hopes of building up the orchestra and advancing the standard of music in the young city. He gave two concerts which promised well, but he soon discovered that the German musicians did not like him and were forming cabals against him which would be sure to impair his usefulness, if not defeat his purposes. Thereupon he promptly resigned and left the city. I have never been able to discover the cause of this opposition, and can only attribute it to the fact that he was too great a musician for them to comprehend. Pending the appointment of a new conductor, Dyhrenfurth reappeared and gave a short season of promenade concerts, closing with a masquerade and ball. As it was the first ball of that kind ever given in the city, the following newspaper report of it may be interesting:

"The hall was crowded with a gay assembly, a large majority of whom were *en costume*, and everything passed off right merrily. There was every variety of characters represented, from a monk treading measures with the daughter of the regiment, to Brother Jonathan ogling a bevy of flower girls. The whole affair was creditable to Mr. Dyhrenfurth and gave entire satisfaction to all who participated in it. Captain Robert Kinzie, the Indian agent, appeared in Indian costume and danced an Indian dance to suitable music."

After Bergmann's resignation, the Society went to pieces, owing to internal dissensions, but was reconstructed in 1856 with Professor C. W. Webster as conductor. Webster had some reputation as a teacher, but was evidently not the man for conductor, as he was speedily shelved, and this was the end of Philharmonic

societies until 1860. In the latter part of 1856 Henry Ahner organized an orchestra by combining the best players of the Light Guard and Great Western bands, with some of the ex-Philharmonic musicians, and gave Saturday afternoon concerts with the assistance of Henry Perabeau, the pianist, Madame Johannsen, the German opera prima donna, De Passio, the barytone, and other soloists. Ahner was an interesting and most engaging personality. He had been trumpet-player in the old Germania Society which disbanded in New York, as I have already told, whose members scattered in all directions and did good work for music in various cities. Ahner went first to Providence, but not succeeding there, came to Chicago. He had an orchestra of twenty-six pieces, and modelled his concerts after those of the Germania Society. The programmes were popular, and so were the concerts for a time. He gave one series in 1856, beginning November 29, four series in 1857, and five of the sixth series in 1857–1858. That Chicago was not yet ready for orchestral concerts is shown by the fact that each series after the first drew smaller and smaller audiences. As Ahner had no financial backing and was a poor business man, he became discouraged, and withdrew from the field after the last concert, January 6, 1858. He had some money when he came to Chicago, but lost it all. His appeals for help were not recognized, but he labored on manfully and courageously. He was a man of exquisite refinement and most tender sensibilities, and being also of delicate physique, the strain was too much for him. I have a letter from him among my musical

souvenirs, written to me two days before his last concert, in which he desires me to print the programme and ask people to come to the concert, adding at the close: "I feel that I shall not trouble you again." The concert was given to a handful of people, and within two weeks afterwards he died penniless, broken-hearted, and almost alone. Two or three of us paid his funeral expenses, and accompanied his body to the cemetery one bitterly cold January afternoon in a blinding snow-storm, and left him to his rest.

Never was there a musician of more honest purpose, a gentleman of finer quality, than Henry Ahner. Never did a musician work harder, and never was a musician more ungratefully treated or meagrely compensated. His career in Chicago resembled a tragedy. Julius Unger followed Ahner. He, too, I believe, was an ex-Germanian. He was of coarser make-up, of better business ability, but not so good a musician as Ahner. He was aggressive, blustering, indifferent to praise or censure, and reckless in his methods. He began a series of afternoon concerts in February, 1858, with virtually the same orchestra as that which Ahner employed. Possibly he might have forced the people of Chicago to attend them, for they rather liked his bombastic manner and hustling ways, had not a competitor suddenly appeared upon the scene. One J. M. Mozart and his wife, who was an excellent singer, organized a scratch orchestra and gave opposition concerts on the same afternoons. Mrs. Mozart was very popular, and as Mr. Mozart kept in the background, Mrs. Mozart not only won out, but fairly drove Unger out of the city,

leaving a long train of creditors to mourn his departure. It was a disastrous victory, however, as it cost the Mozarts all they had and at last forced them in time to retire also. For two years Chicago was without an orchestra.

Ten years elapsed after Julius Dyhrenfurth made his initial venture with his German compatriots, and in that period the evolution of the orchestra had been slow, uncertain, and discouraging. Two or three Philharmonic societies had disappeared and eight conductors dropped their batons, but in 1860 a new conductor appears upon the scene at the head of an entirely new Philharmonic Society. In 1857 Hans Balatka came here from Milwaukee to conduct the annual Northwestern Sängerfest, and made a very favorable impression. In 1860 he came here to live, and his conspicuous ability as leader at the dedication of Bryan Hall, September 17 of that year, still further commended him to Chicago musicians, and especially to the trustees of the new Philharmonic Society as the proper person to direct the orchestra. These trustees were E. I. Tinkham, banker; U. H. Crosby, of opera-house fame; Samuel Johnson, real estate dealer; Edward Stickney, banker; J. V. Lemoyne, attorney; and John Shortall, abstract maker, for many years afterwards president of the Humane Society. The Society was complete, all save its conductor. As Balatka had been tried and had demonstrated his ability, they unanimously tendered him the leadership. He accepted it, and Bryan Hall was selected for the concerts. The new scheme met with popular favor at once. Subscriptions

OF
CALIFORNIA

HANS BALATKA

were generous, the orchestra was an excellent one, and the hall was remarkably well adapted for concerts of this kind. The first concert was given November 19, to a crowded house. It was evident that an orchestra was no longer an experiment in Chicago, and from that time to this not a year has passed without orchestral concerts. I append the programme for the opening night.

1. Symphony in D major, No. 2, op. 36 . . . . . *Beethoven*
2. Quintet and chorus from "Martha" . . . . . *Flotow*
3. Overture to "The Merry Wives of Windsor" . . . . . *Nicolai*
4. Sextet from "Lucia" . . . . . *Donisetti*
5. Solo for violin . . . . . *De Beriot*

EMIL WEINBERG

6. Chorus from "Tannhäuser" . . . . . *Wagner*

Chicago had heard Beethoven's Second Symphony before, when the Germania Society played it, but it listened to Wagner's music for the first time that evening. It is interesting to note that the conductor avoided interruptions by adopting the exact antithesis of the plan now in use. In the concerts of the Theodore Thomas orchestra the doors are closed when the conductor takes his place at the desk, until the conclusion of the opening number. In those days there was a short intermission previous to the performance of the closing number, so that those who did not wish to hear it could leave. The opening concert was a decided success, and before the close of the first season the concerts were all the rage. People were turned away every night. Balatka was the musical hero of the city. The trustees were overcome with delight. Not a cloud was visible in the musical sky. They cherished hopes of

competing with New York and Boston, and Chicago began to plume itself as a musical centre. The Society lived for eight years, and in that time gave fifty regular concerts, besides extra *matinées*, which were largely attended, and at which popular music was performed. In 1863–1864 Balatka also gave "Classical Chamber Concerts," in which Dr. Fessel, his father-in-law, played first violin; Müller, second; Nurnberger, viola; Balatka, 'cello; and Mrs. Kloss, piano. These, however, were not the first chamber concerts in Chicago. That credit belongs to the two series known as the "Briggs House Concerts," given in 1860–1861 by Henri de Clerque, first violin; Buderbach, second violin; Melms, 'cello; and Paul Becker, piano. To these four musicians, and excellent ones they were, Chicago owes its first acquaintance with the classical composers, as well as with Brahms, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Onslow, Liszt, and others of the modern school. They were contemporary with the Mason-Thomas combination in New York, and their service for the higher music was not less patient, ambitious, and intelligent; but they were ahead of their time. Indeed the time has not arrived even yet. No local string quartette has been successful in Chicago. Even the Kneisel Quartette has had to work hard to secure a limited constituency. Chamber music is not popular — perhaps because it is the best and highest form of music.

To return to the Philharmonic Society. For six years it was highly successful, and it gradually became a fashionable event. This was a misfortune, for fashion is fickle. In the sixth year the attendance began to

fall off and interest waned. In the seventh year the decadence was still more apparent. A desperate effort was made to restore the Society to its old position, and no one worked harder than Balatka himself. I was in the thick of it and know who did the hard work. But it was too late. The Society was moribund. The eighth season was a failure in point of pecuniary results, and the surplus of former seasons was exhausted. The trustees gravely and sorrowfully canvassed the condition of affairs, acknowledged they could see no way of replenishing their empty treasury, and rather than pile up a debt, decided to stop. The Society expired in April, and was tenderly deposited with the other Philharmonic mummies. Its assets were just sufficient to pay for a symposium of funeral baked meats which the trustees, Balatka, and the present writer consumed. A few touching tributes to the memory of the deceased were spoken, and then all departed with pleasant memories of the old friend and regrets that they should not see it again.

Looking back over its records, it must be acknowledged that the Society did a most important work for music in Chicago, and too much credit cannot be given to Hans Balatka for his part in it. He was the first to lead the cause of the higher music here. He introduced all the Beethoven symphonies, except the Ninth; the E flat major and G minor of Mozart; the C minor and F major of Gade; the "Scotch" of Mendelssohn, and the "Triumphal" of Ulrich, besides a great number of minor pieces which are now standard in orchestral programmes. He also presented a long array of soloists,

among them the concert singers, Inez Fabbri, Emma Gillingham Bostwick, Hattie Brown Miller, Frederika Magnussen, Marie de Rohde, Emilia Paige, Mureo Celli, Freda de Gebele, Pauline Castri, Estelle Soames, Annie Main, Miss Dewey, Miss Selles, Julia Ellsworth, Cassie Matteson, Charles R. Adams, Louis Dochez (de Passio), M. Ledogard, William Ludden, William Castle, Lotti, S. C. Campbell, and Alexander Bischoff; the violinists, Emil Weinberg, Henry de Clerque, William Lewis, William Buderbach, F. M. Sofge, and Camilla Urso; the pianists, Robert Heller, James M. Wehli, Irma de Pelgrom, Richard Mulder, Franz Staab, Paul Becker, Adolf Baumbach, and Mrs. Kloss; and the 'cellists, Melms, Haig, and Henri Mollenhauer.

Balatka soon emerged from the ruins of the Philharmonic Society, and in June, 1868, conducted at the sixteenth festival of the German Sängerbund of North America. Elated by his success, he reorganized the Philharmonic orchestra and gave a series of concerts in Farwell Hall in which he introduced Mendelssohn's "Italian" Symphony and "Midsummer Night's Dream" music entire, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, Haydn's E Flat Major Symphony, and Schubert's C Major Symphony. Although the financial result was far from encouraging, he undertook a second season in 1869 and gave the first concert November 28. On the next evening Theodore Thomas gave his first concert in Chicago in the same hall with his Central Park Garden orchestra. The masterly leading of the great conductor, then in his prime, and the accuracy, taste, quality, and finish of that incomparable band of garden players, sounded the

death knell of the hopes of Balatka. His second season was incontinently abandoned. It would have provoked fatal comparisons between the two orchestras. Four years later, at a time when Mr. Thomas's own affairs were in an uncertain condition, Balatka gave some orchestral concerts at the music hall on Clark Street opposite the Sherman House, but they were not very successful. In 1881 he was conductor of the twenty-second festival of the German Sängerbund of North America. The forces, which he directed with marked ability, were a large orchestra and mass chorus, including forty-six German societies reënforced by the Apollo Club and Beethoven Society of Chicago. He had also the assistance of an unusual array of solo artists, including Madame Peschka-Leutner, Emma Donaldi, Annie Louise Cary; William Candidus and Hugo Lindau, tenors; and Myron W. Whitney, Franz Remmertz, and Jacob Benzing, bassos. His programmes contained many important works, among them Bruch's "Odysseus," "Frithjof," and "Salamis," Mendelssohn's "Elijah," Abt's "Brünnen Wunderbar," Titl's "Consecration of Solomon's Temple," Reissman's "Drusus' Death," Introduction and third scene of "Lohengrin," Liszt's "Tasso" and "Preludes," Schumann's Second Symphony, and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. It was Balatka's triumph, and it consoled him for many bitter disappointments.

In 1888 the Chicago Symphony Society was organized, with Louis Wahl as president and Balatka as conductor. Five concerts and public rehearsals were announced. An orchestra of sixty players was organized. Schu-

mann's B Flat, Rubinstein's "Ocean," Beethoven's Sixth, and Goldmark's "Country Wedding" symphonies, Liszt's "Tasso" and other large works, besides vocal duets, trios, and quartettes, were promised, and Lilli Lehmann, Matilda Marcello, Madame Schröder-Hanfstängel, Paul Kalisch, and Alvary were engaged. A few concerts were given, but the scheme was soon abandoned, and this ended Balatka's active connection with orchestral work. The rest of his days were spent in the drudgery of teaching. I shall speak of him again in another connection.

On March 5, 1891, the music lovers of Chicago were notified by the Chicago Orchestral Association "formed for the purpose of maintaining a permanent orchestra of the highest character, resident in Chicago, and giving orchestral and other musical performances of the first class," that the first season of concerts and rehearsals would begin October 16 and continue twenty weeks, and that the director, Theodore Thomas, and his orchestra would aim at "the highest results comparable with those attained by the New York Philharmonic Society and Boston Symphony Orchestra." For fourteen seasons Mr. Thomas made good this announcement. Many obstacles were encountered, but one after another they were overcome. There were many dark and discouraging days in the history of the Association, but its members shared the faith and courage of the director and worked steadily on in the path marked out by him. When the appeal was made to the people that the burden was too heavy to be carried any longer without help, they nobly responded

by making the orchestra permanent and housing it in its own home. The fourteen seasons of this orchestra under Mr. Thomas's direction must be set down as the crowning achievement of his half century of work. The programmes of those years are the best he made during that long period. He was able to make them upon a high standard because for the first time he had players whose salaries were guaranteed, and hence he had little difficulty in procuring first-rank men and was not harassed by personal financial responsibilities. He had also for the first time a regular audience which unquestioningly accepted programmes of the higher music. He left behind him a standard of music and musical performance which will make Chicago orchestra audiences unwilling to accept anything lower. He left to Chicago one of the three or four great orchestras of the world, now ably led by Frederick A. Stock, promoted from the ranks. This is the full flowering of the little seed which Julius Dyhrenfurth planted fifty-eight years ago.

CHAPTER XX

MUSICAL SOCIETIES

THE EARLY SOCIETIES — THE MUSICAL UNION AND "THE HAY-MAKERS" — THE MENDELSSOHN SOCIETY — THE GERMANIA MÄNNERCHOR — INTERNAL DISSENSIONS — RIVAL OPERATIC AMATEUR PERFORMANCES — THE GERMANIA GEMÜTLICHKEIT — DYHRENFURTH'S PUNCHES — DIETZSCH AND HIS CORONER'S REPORTS — THE CONCORDIA AND LIEDERKRANZ — THE ORATORIO SOCIETY — A VICTIM OF FIRE — WINTER POST-FIRE ENTERTAINMENTS — ORIGIN OF THE APOLLO CLUB — A REMARKABLE CAREER — CARL WOLFSOHN AND THE BEETHOVEN SOCIETY

THE very early history of musical societies in Chicago is misty at best. Little is known about them, for apparently no records were kept. If they were, the omnivorous fire of 1871 must have destroyed them. We simply know that there were the Old Settlers' Harmonic Society in 1835; the Chicago Sacred Music Society, C. A. Collier conductor, in 1842; the Choral Union, J. Johnson conductor, in 1846; the Mozart Society, conductor unknown, in 1849; and the Männergesangverein, Charles Sonne, president, and Emil Rein, conductor, in 1852. Musical societies have nearly always been arenas for internal strife. Perhaps it is a sign of enthusiasm or restless activity. In any event, dissensions broke out in the ranks of the Männergesangverein in 1855 and eventually led to a secession of the discontented. The Society died in 1859, and

meanwhile the seceders organized the Freie Sängerbund and elected Henry Ahner conductor. Nothing prospered with which poor Ahner was connected, and so the career of the Freie Sängerbund was brief.

The year 1857 witnessed the organization of the Chicago Musical Union, and of this society I can speak from personal experience. The following officers were elected: President, J. S. Platt; Vice President, J. G. Lumbard; Librarian, A. L. Coe; Secretary and Treasurer, D. A. Kimbark; conductor, C. M. Cady. Cady was afterwards a partner in the music firm of Root and Cady, successors to H. M. Higgins, who became so engrossed with table tipping and spooks that his business was soon at loose ends. I met him many years afterwards at his ranch in Southern California where he was experimenting with seedless lemons. The best singers in Chicago were members of the Musical Union, and there were no dissensions in the ranks. They were a very happy family, and their principal objects were public entertainment, personal enjoyment, and social hilarity. They succeeded in all of them. The first concert was given April 7, 1857, with a miscellaneous programme, the soloists being Mrs. C. Blakely and Kate Jones, sopranos; Fannie L. Collins and Mary Jones, altos; A. B. Tobey and A. Leonard, tenors; J. L. Thompson and J. G. Lumbard, bassos; Franz and Louis Staab, pianists; and Henry Ahner, cornetist. The Society lasted eight happy years; it disbanded because other societies offered dangerous competition, and also because of the pressure of business interests which claimed the

time of members. In 1857 it gave "The Creation," and in 1860 Ries's cantata, "The Morning," and "Elijah." On the seventeenth of November of that year there was a notable performance of George F. Root's pleasant little cantata, "The Haymakers," which was thus announced in the programme:

METROPOLITAN HALL.

FRIDAY EVENING, NOV. 17, 1860.

The Operatic Cantata of the

HAYMAKERS.

In costume, with appropriate scenery, action, farming implements, &c.
By a company of ladies and gentlemen from the

CHICAGO MUSICAL UNION.

Under the direction of

MR. GEORGE F. ROOT.

Farmer	MR. JULES G. LUMBARD
Anna, Farmer's daughter	MRS. MATTISON
Mary, " "	MRS. THOMAS
Katy, dairy maid	MRS. PHILLBO
William, foreman	MR. CHARLES C. PHILLIPS
John, assistant foreman	MR. M. F. PRICE
Snipkins, a city youth, unused to rural affairs	MR. E. T. ROOT

Semi-Chorus of Mowers, Semi-Chorus of Spreaders, Semi-Chorus of Rakers.

FULL CHORUS OF HAYMAKERS.

Scenery painted expressly for the Haymakers by

MR. J. J. WHYTAL.

Doors open at 6½. Performance to commence at 7½.

Tickets, 50 cents.

To be had of Root & Cady, No. 95 Clark Street; S. C. Griggs & Co.'s book store, No. 39 and 41 Lake Street; and at H. M. Higgins' music store, Randolph Street.

Tribune Print, 51 Clark Street.

The composer and nearly all the merry haymakers of 1860 have fallen victims to the inevitable scythe of "pallida mors." "Old Farmer" Lumbard, however, still remains to remind us of the days of Cassie Matteson and Charley Seaverus, Fanny Root and Charley Phillips, Ella White and John Hubbard, Annie Main and Harry

Johnson, Julia Ellsworth and John A. Jewett, and a score more of young girls and fellows who were good singers and who sang because they loved to in the days that are no more, and who are now either in the gray autumn of life or have passed over the river. The officers of the Society in 1860 were Dr. Levi D. Boone, president, Chicago's first and only Know-nothing Mayor; B. F. Downing, a real estate operator, vice-president; R. M. Clark, librarian; T. H. Wade, pianist, a delicate little fellow, full of music to his very finger-tips, who died of consumption not long after this time; and A. L. Coe, conductor. All these also are gone save Clark, and Clark is immortal. He still carries his tuning instruments and walks the streets of Chicago, as indifferent to their roar and as careless of current comment as he did fifty years ago. Clark is a bit of old Chicago set down in the bustling, crowded, dirty new Chicago, sternly declining to recognize any of its demands or expectations. What cares a man for the Chicago of 1908 who tuned for Adelina Patti more than fifty years ago, and who has tuned for nearly every great artist who has been here during that period? Clark is of the vintage of the fifties and has mellowed with age. In 1863 Balatka succeeded to the conductorship of the Musical Union, and brought out much excellent music with such soloists as Annie Main, Lizzie Fitch, Cassie Matteson, Julia Ellsworth, A. R. Sabin, and Jules Lumbard, vocalists; William Lewis, violinist; and Sarah Tillinghast and Nellie Conkey, pianists. The Society's crowning triumph was its performance in April, 1864, of Lortzing's "Czar and Carpenter" in English. The arrangement

was made by Balatka, and it was given to large audiences for five nights, with the following cast: Peter the Great, William O. Faulhaber; Peter Ivanoff, E. T. Root; Van Bett, J. G. Lumbard; Maria, Annie Main; Mrs. Brown, Mrs. C. B. White; Admiral Lefont, J. H. Brown; Lord Syndham, G. C. Pearson; Major de Chateauneuf, Edward Schultze. During the following year the Society sang Mendelssohn's "Ninety-Fifth Psalm" and Rossini's "Stabat Mater," and then disbanded. During the latter part of its career the Society probably escaped a terrible disaster. The members had planned an excursion to Milwaukee and tried to secure the steamer *Lady Elgin* for a certain date. As the steamer had already been engaged for that date, the excursion was deferred to a more convenient opportunity. The fate of the *Lady Elgin* on that trip is well known. Off Winnetka it collided with a schooner and sank, and hundreds of lives were lost.

One of the causes of the disbandment of the Musical Union was the organization of the Mendelssohn Society in 1858, which took away many of its members. Harry Johnson, a favorite bass singer, was president of the Mendelssohn, and Adolph W. Dohn its conductor. Mr. Dohn was engaged in active business, but devoted all his leisure time to music. He was one of the best equipped musicians Chicago has ever had, — a man of strong intellectual grasp, a leader of great executive ability, and a musical scholar of more than ordinary attainments, as was shown afterwards in his leadership of the Apollo Club and in the important services he rendered to Theodore Thomas in his orchestral work.

ADOLPH W. DOHN

UNIV. OF
ARIZONA

Mr. Dohn did not believe in giving concerts until his society was ready. He kept the members at rehearsals for more than a year, giving a recital now and then for personal friends, so that they might become gradually accustomed to singing in public. In 1865 the Society gave an important concert at the Sherman House, at which Mendelssohn's "First Walpurgis Night," "May Song," "Nightingale," "Shepherds' Song," the chorus "Lord, Thou alone," from his "St. Paul," and Kuhlau's "Wanderer's Night Song," were sung. Mr. Bichel, the violinist, played a solo, and Becker, Bichel, and Balatka, the trio of Beethoven's in G, op. 1, no. 2. The Society created such an impression in this concert that it was engaged to dedicate Kingsbury Hall, April 13, 1862. Upon this occasion it produced Titl's cantata, "Consecration of the Temple," Harry Johnson taking the bass solos, and Sterndale Bennett's charming pastoral cantata "The May Queen," the solo parts of which were distributed as follows: May Queen, Miss Sheridan; Queen, Miss Ghent; Lover, Mr. Jones; Robin Hood, Mr. de Passio. I have often wondered why this cantata has not been heard again, indeed why Bennett's delightful music has been entirely neglected. The Society sang for the last time at the Lincoln funeral services in 1865, which were held in St. Paul's Church.

I come now to a most interesting period in the history of Chicago's musical societies. The year 1865, in which both the Musical Union and Mendelssohn Society disbanded, witnessed the organization of the Germania Männerchor, with John G. Gindele, president,

and Otto Lob, conductor. The Germania started upon its career with flying colors and sounding trumpets, but before the year closed there was the inevitable dissension, and Balatka, in spite of his musical devotion and good fellowship, as usual was at the bottom of it; for it must be admitted that Hans was a past master in intrigue. He was proposed for membership, and at once the Germania divided into two hostile camps, — the adherents of Balatka and the adherents of Lob. There was many a hot time at the meetings, and Frau Musica at last gathered up her skirts and fled. The old hearty Austrinkens gave place to perfunctory Prosits. Steins no longer smote the table of a united brotherhood, and the salamanders lost in sonority. The strife at last waxed so fierce that the Lob faction seceded in 1866 and organized a new Männerchor, the Concordia, whose name was significant of the peace and harmony to prevail in the new society. Charles Kauffeld, the banker, was elected its president, and Lob conductor. In the meantime the Germania reorganized and elected Balatka conductor. The rivalry between the two societies was eager but healthful, for it gave Chicago the best amateur performances of opera it has ever had, and better indeed than many of the representations by professional troupes. On the eighth and eleventh of February, 1870, the Germania produced "Der Freyschütz" with the following cast: Agathe, Mrs. Clara Huck; Annina, Flora Kuntz; Caspar, Koch; Max, Schultze; Zamiel, Janisch; Kilian, Meyer; Otticar, Mueller; Cuno, Thiem; Hermit, Goodwillie. The Concordia promptly met its rival in April with "The

Magic Flute," cast as follows: Pamina, Mrs. Clara Huck; Queen of Night, Mrs. Lang-Ziegler; Tamino, Bischoff; Sarastro, Hoffman; and Papageno, Foltz. The Germania retorted in May with "Stradella" and the following cast: Leonora, Flora Kuntze; Stradella, Schultze; Bassi, Saveri; Malvolio, Koch; Barberini, Hunneman. The version used was prepared by Dudley Buck. "Stradella" was beautifully mounted, and its performance was so brilliant that the Concordia gave up the contest. Mrs. Huck, mother of Mrs. Marshal Field, Jr., was the bright particular star in the first two performances. She was a beautiful woman, a fine actress, and a well-trained singer. She was also a great favorite both in American and German society. There have been few performances of opera in Chicago more satisfactory than these, for the solo work was well done, and both chorus and orchestra were incomparably better than those brought by impresarios. Have we lost all our singers that such representations cannot be repeated, or has Chicago become so big and so deeply engrossed in material matters that it has no time to give to their consideration? Of the principal performers in these operas at least two remain to tell us of the glories of those days. "Kilian" Meyer, still in commercial business, and "Papageno" Foltz, the architect, occasionally revive the old memories by singing for their friends. In 1867 the Germania also gave a series of pleasant summer night festivals at the Rink on the corner of Jackson Boulevard and Wabash Avenue. In the course of time Balatka encountered more troubles, and finding that the spirit of discontent was dangerously

increasing, he resigned, and accepted the leadership of the Liederkranz Society. Julius Fuchs, I think, was his successor. He was a connoisseur not only in music, but in all the arts, and a scholar of ponderous learning and painstaking industry, whose catalogues and bibliographs attest to the extent of his cumbersome knowledge and his patient researches after information for which few cared but which the old man greatly prized. The subsequent career of the Germania is so well known that I need not follow it further.

The social festivities of the Germania at Dyhrenfurth Hall on Randolph Street were Olympian in character. Emil Dietzsch and "Prince Carnival," Martin Meyer, were conspicuous figures on these occasions. There was no more suggestion of merriment in Dyhrenfurth's face than you may find in the stony, immutable face of the Sphinx. He was stately in person and dignified in speech, and was regarded by his associates in their orgies with a sort of reverential deference. Liberties were not taken with him. Even the privileged jesters refrained from making him the target of their ridicule. But underneath this apparently austere exterior he had a quiet fund of humor, and now and then there was just the suspicion of a twinkle in his eyes, suggestive of a merry stir in his "inneres." It was a joyous spectacle on occasions when the purpose of the hour was too important for beer, to see him brew the series of punches which were named for the dignitaries of the Church — the bishop, archbishop, cardinal, and pope. No disrespect for the Church was intended by this nomenclature. The titles were simply meant to indicate the increased

degree of excellence in each. How carefully and tenderly, even solemnly, he would mix the ingredients, and how lovingly he regarded each finished product as he ascended the scale! And when the pope was finished and the bowl was garnished, what a radiant smile would illuminate those heavy features as he stood there, ladle in hand, the very ideal of Gemüthlichkeit! He was an artist at that work, and he knew it. But how few could achieve that dizzy climb and reach the summit unscathed! The artist could, therefore he was master of the feast and beloved by all. Martin Meyer was "a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy," as brisk as a bumble bee, and sometimes could sting like one with his apparently innocent quips. But Emil Dietzsch was the soul of every occasion. Everybody loved him because he loved everybody. He was the Admirable Crichton of the Germania, and later of the Liederkranz. He was a good singer, a capital burlesque comedian, a pleasant writer, a natural humorist, a genial restaurateur, the best and most popular coroner Cook County has ever had, and a scholar in the classics and the moderns. He was particularly happy in burlesque, and at one of the Germania's festivities he even made Dyhrenfurth laugh with his personation of Gretchen in "Faust." It must be borne in mind that Dietzsch was a man of massive build with a deep bass voice. He appeared in the conventional costume of Marguerite, wearing a blond wig and braids hanging down his back, and aped the demureness and simplicity of the maiden to the life, his corpulence and sonorous voice intensifying the comedy of the situation. During his

versatile career he kept a restaurant, — I think it was on Wells Street, — and made a specialty of certain dishes, especially game, which was very plenty in those days. As a chef he would have been a great success. He was intensely patriotic, and upon the occasion of one of the victories in the Franco-German War he rode triumphantly into his restaurant upon his white horse, waving the German flag, and lustily singing "Wacht am Rhein." He combined the romance of Blondel, the mischief of Till Eulenspiegel, and the merry antics of Triboulet. In 1878 Dietzsch was coroner, and never did Cook County have a better, more useful, or more entertaining one. Coroners' reports are not usually regarded as of any consequence, from a literary, poetic, or philosophical standpoint, but his three annual reports, published under the caption, "Coroner's Quest," are models of the humor, philosophy, and vital interest which may be found in statistics. In his apt hands they are elevated to the dignity of an art. The reports cover nearly every branch of learning from the days of the ancient Greeks and Romans to the present, abound in pat quotations from the classics as well as from the modern writers, and are filled with poetic and romantic disquisitions upon the tragedies which came under his inquisitorial scrutiny. In a luminous introduction he discusses the character and scope of statistics and gives us the views of Quetelet, Achenwall, and other great statisticians. He traces the history of the ancient coroners, the causes and peculiarities of suicide, and the views of ancient and modern sociologists concerning it. Tenderly he laments the fate of those who have fallen

victims to disappointment in love and the tragedies of the pariahs. He seeks to find the reason why so many of his own countrymen commit suicide, and arrives at the theory that "the habitual use of beer seems to have a tendency to direct their psychological ailments into the form of a metamorphosis from phlegmatic ease to melancholy, and, finally, suicidal mania." He devotes much space to homicides, and eloquently advocates compulsory education and better pedagogues as a remedy for acts of violence. He enlarges upon the study of natural science as a substitute for the cheap and sensational literature which exposes the child's mind to "a putrid psychological process of fermentation, the effect of which can scarcely ever be eradicated." He searches into the domestic economy and finds that "the *ennui* and *dolce far niente*, which is so frequently felt by women in hotels and boarding-houses while their husbands are out at business, and the many hours of the day which they must spend in lonely rooms without children or real occupation, are very often the first but significant circumstances to prompt suicide." But Dietzsch was at his best when describing some individual case which came before him. I quote one of many such, the touching tale of Tshin Fo, a Chinaman who loved an Irish girl, "not wisely but too well," and was deserted by her.

"Longingly he looked forward to his wedding-day, when he could lead home the one he preferred above all the daughters of the Celestial Empire, in order to share with her the soft boiled rice and fat-fried rat. Then suddenly he learned the sad news, that she to whom he had confidently intrusted his hard-earned coins and greenbacks had left for

parts unknown, without leaving a trace behind her. That black, magnificently braided pigtail, those almond eyes, and that broad Mongolian nose, could not finally win her; blushingly she followed the footsteps of her red-haired Pat from Limerick, and left the outwitted Celestial to his unutterable woe. For him there was no consolation, and, with gloomy thoughts about his misfortune, he resolved to die. Saying a last prayer to the primitive god, Taiki or Buddha, he locked himself in his room, threw himself upon the untouched bridal couch, with his face turned to the East, and shot himself with the usual bullet from a revolver, in the abdomen, which, according to the views of a spiritual Frenchman, is the seat of all evil, for all evils come from the stomach, as a result of bad digestion."

Then in an outburst of reminiscent pity, Dietzsch reflects upon Tshin Fo's fate as he looks upon his grave, which he accidentally discovered some time afterwards:

"After the custom of his country, his friends had placed plates and vessels of all kinds around the grave, in the belief that the spirits of those who leave this world need some food upon the long journey into the unknown regions of superior happiness or temporary condemnation. Happy Tshin Fo, I thought, who seems to have understood the teaching of Buddha, thou didst kill thyself by thine own hands deliberately (honorably, according to the views of thy people), in order to complete the sooner the circle of thy life, and to enable thee to enter the place of thy destiny — the twenty-sixth heaven of heavens. 'Peace to thy ashes.' But to thee, false Christian girl, who broke his heart and stole away into thy hiding-place, to thee I would give the advice of Hamlet to Ophelia: 'Get thee to a nunnery,' Bridget."

Dietzsch's reports, and Carter Harrison's speech in Congress upon the proposition to abolish the Marine Band, made about the same time, show that Chicago in

the old times had poets among her officials. I should like to quote a paragraph from the Harrison speech, for it is one of my musical memories:

"For fifteen long dreary years at the other end of Pennsylvania avenue the White House has been occupied by a republican, and during the winter months, of evenings, the Marine Band has been up there at receptions to discourse sweet music for the delectation of a republican President, and for the delectation of his friends. At every reception a republican President has stood in a certain room receiving his guests, and his pet republican friends, in white vests and white cravats, have stood behind him enjoying the dulcet tones poured forth from the silver throats of silvered instruments by twenty-four gentlemen in scarlet coats. For long years, of summer Saturday afternoons, twenty-four gentlemen in scarlet coats have caused twenty-four silvered instruments, on the green in front of the White House, to belch forth martial music for the delectation of a republican President, and for the delectation of his republican friends. On the 4th of next March, sir, there will be a democratic President in the White House. Sir, is the democratic President to have no music? Delicacy forbids me calling names. Sir, when the great unknown gets here, shall we have no music; shall no tunes come from those twenty-four silver-throated instruments, blown out by these twenty-four gentlemen in red coats, to welcome him to the White House? Shall we have no music when we introduce him to the American people? Not by my vote. No, sir; never! *Never!*"

I wonder in what far-off regions Dietzsch now wanders, comforting unhappy shades or adding to the joys of cherubim and seraphim with his merry antics, and Harrison still enthrals rapt audiences with his eloquent periods.

In 1869 the Oratorio Society was organized and the following officers were elected: President, George L. Dunlap; Vice-President, E. I. Tinkham; Treasurer, William Sprague; Conductor, Hans Balatka. Its first concert was given May 8 of that year, upon which occasion "The Creation" was sung, with Madame Parepa-Rosa and Mr. Rudolphsen in the solo parts. The Society performed several oratorios during its four years' existence, but it was always financially hampered because it was not generously supported. Oratorio is not very popular in Chicago unless eminent artists appear. To add to its troubles the Society lost all its property in the great fire of 1871. The Boston Handel and Haydn Society, however, made good many of its losses, and it was soon on its feet again with J. A. Butterfield as conductor. It gave "The Messiah" in May, 1872, and a concert in the following Autumn. While getting ready for another concert in January, 1873, it was again visited by fire and from this second blow it failed to recover. Bad luck had followed it continuously, and no further effort was made to keep it alive.

I have already referred to the dissensions in the ranks of the Germania Männerchor which forced Balatka to resign. He promptly accepted the same position in the Liederkranz Society, of which Edmund Jussen was president. During its career the Liederkranz devoted itself to the performance of opera on several occasions. In April, 1874, it gave a fine representation of "Masaniello," with Hélène Hastreiter, Miss Kenkel, Bischoff,

Schultze, Koch, Thiem, Goodwillie, and Meyer in the principal roles. In March, 1875, it produced the fourth act of "The Huguenots," in May, 1875, the fourth act of "Ernani," and on November 8 of the same year it gave a remarkable performance of "The Merry Wives of Windsor" at McVicker's Theatre, with the following cast: Mrs. Ford, Anna Rossetti; Mrs. Page, Kate Wordragen; Anna, Mrs. Dony; Fenton, Schultze; Ford, Greiner; Falstaff, Koch; Page, Overbeck; Slender, Wolf; Caius, Meyer.

The great fire of October, 1871, as I have already said, temporarily ended the activities of music in every direction, and it was slow in resuming them. In this connection a condensed statement of the entertainments which helped the people to bear up against the calamity during the gloomy winter following it may not be uninteresting. The record from October 23, fifteen days after the fire, to February 12 is as follows:

October twenty-third. — Wood's Museum Company in a performance of "The Poor Gentleman" at Globe Theatre, Desplaines Street.

October thirtieth. — Lecture on "Schiller" by Bayard Taylor, at Michigan Avenue Baptist Church.

November first. — Jane Coombs's Company at Standard Hall, then called the Michigan Avenue Theatre.

November fourteenth. — Lecture by John G. Saxe at Union Park Congregational Church.

November seventeenth. — Lecture to Young Men's Christian Association by Anna Dickinson.

November twenty-third. — Wyndham Company at Michigan Avenue Theatre.

November twenty-seventh. — Lecture by Ralph Waldo Emerson.

November twenty-seventh. — Arlington's Minstrels at West Side Opera House.

December eleventh. — Lecture by Elisabeth Cady Stanton.

December fourteenth. — Concert at Martine's Hall for the benefit of St.

John's Church, in which Mrs. De Roode Rice, pianist, Mrs. J. A. Farwell, Mrs. O. K. Johnson, and Messrs. Howard and Sloan participated. This was the first concert after the fire.

December fifteenth. — Barnabee Concert Troupe at Michigan Avenue Baptist Church.

December nineteenth. — Lecture by Mark Twain.

December twenty-sixth. — Lady Orchestra at Burlington Hall, State and Sixteenth streets.

December twenty-eighth. — Concert at Plymouth Congregational Church by choir and J. R. Flagler, organist.

February twelfth. — Carl Rosa and Neuendorf Opera Season at Globe Theatre.

I am now come to a memorable event in the musical history of Chicago, — the organization of the Apollo Musical Club, now in its thirty-sixth year and still flourishing under the competent direction of Mr. Harrison Wild. There have been many versions of its origin, but I am in a position to state the authoritative one. The first conception of the Apollo Club is to be credited to Mr. Silas G. Pratt, now teaching music in New York. One Sunday afternoon in the early summer of 1872 Mr. Pratt came to my house and suggested that the time was ripe for the organization of a singing society of male voices upon the lines of the Apollo Club of Boston. He brought with him the constitution and by-laws of the latter. We read them carefully and discussed his suggestion from every point of view. It seemed to me also a favorable time for such a scheme. Six months had elapsed since the great fire, and no move of any kind had been made to revive the interests of music. There was no musical society of any kind in the city. Something ought to be done. A society such as Mr. Pratt proposed would have the field to itself for a time at least, and it could have the pick of

singers. At last I said to him: "I think your scheme is practicable. Go ahead with it, and I will help you all I can." He urged me to take the presidency of the society, and I told him I would consider it. Mr. Pratt went to work with his customary energy and soon had a sufficient number of tenors and basses enrolled to make a good working männerchor. Some time in September following twelve of them met in an old church, corner of Wabash Avenue and Sixteenth Street, occupied at that time by Lyon and Healy's music store. After singing a few part songs, which Mr. Pratt directed, a committee was appointed to draft a form of organization. At a subsequent and more numerously attended meeting the committee reported, and the report was accepted by the following gentlemen, who are the charter members of the Apollo Club: S. G. Pratt, Charles T. Root, Charles V. Pring, Warren C. Coffin, Frank A. Bowen, Fritz Foltz, J. R. Ranney, E. H. Pratt, William H. Coulston, Louis Falk, Harry Gates, C. C. Philips, J. S. Marsh, W. W. Boynton, S. E. Cleveland, Edwin Brown, A. B. Stiles, Philo A. Otis, George C. Stebbins, F. S. Pond, Charles C. Curtiss, Theodore F. Brown, H. Rocher, A. L. Goldsmith, William Sprague, A. R. Sabin, William R. Allen, John A. Lyndon, William Cox, L. M. Prentiss, Frank G. Rohner, Frank B. Williams, and George P. Upton. The organization was then perfected by the election of the following officers: President, George P. Upton; Vice President, William Sprague; Treasurer, Frank A. Bowen; Secretary, Charles C. Curtiss; Librarian, W. C. Coffin; Musical Committee, Fritz Foltz, S. E. Cleveland, and Philo A.

Otis. No conductor was chosen at that time. Mr. Pratt conducted the rehearsals for a short time. The Club finally decided to tender the leadership to Mr. A. W. Dohn, the former leader of the Mendelssohn Society. Mr. Bowen and the president waited upon Mr. Dohn and offered the position to him, which he somewhat reluctantly accepted on the condition that the Club would work hard and work together and submit to his judgment on all musical points. He added in his characteristic way: "If the Club don't like me it can discharge me, and if I don't like the Club I will discharge myself without waiting for permission." Dohn was an admirable conductor and a rigid disciplinarian, but the Club took to him kindly notwithstanding his exacting demands upon it as a whole and his brusque personal criticisms. In a short time he produced astonishing results. After working together for several months, both conductor and musical committee were satisfied that they might safely announce concerts. The evening of January 21, 1873, was fixed upon as the date of the first concert, and Standard Hall, the only available hall in the city, as the place. That concert not alone was the successful debut of a new organization, but it marked the beginning of a new impulse in music which was destined to exert a powerful influence upon musical progress and give the Apollo Club a widespread reputation. The programme of this concert was as follows:

1. Chorus — "Loyal Song" . . . . . *Kucken*
2. { *a* "He of All the Best, the Noblest" . . . . . *Schumann*
   { *b* "Greeting" . . . . . *Taubert*

Miss Jessica Haskell

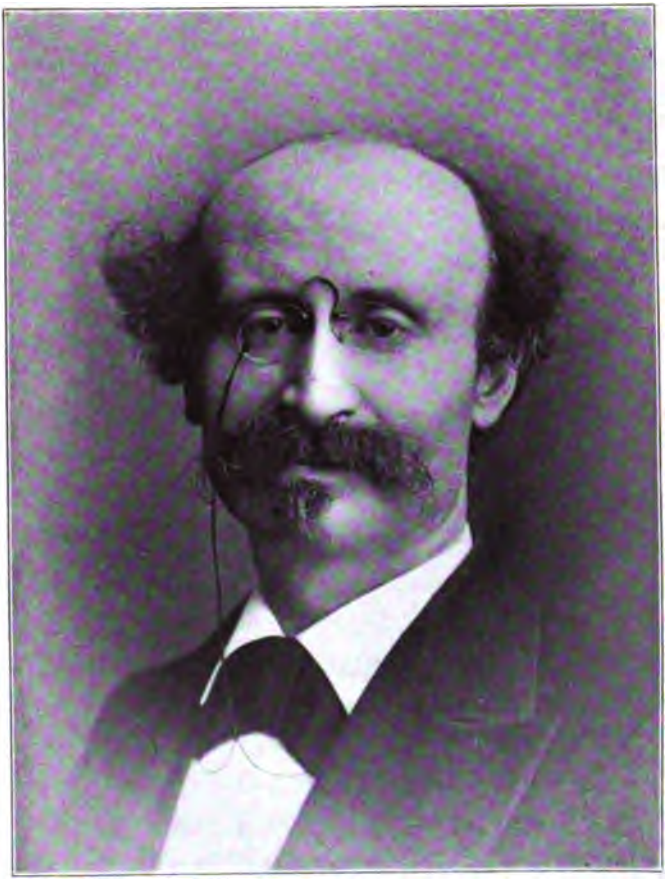
3. Chorus — "Always More" . . . . . *Seifert*
4. Solo — "The Meeting by the Seashore" . . . . . *Loewe*
Mr. Fritz Foltz
5. Chorus — "Beware" . . . . . *Gerschner*
6. Piano Solo — { *a* Serenata . . . . . *Liszt*
b Rhapsodie . . . . . *Willmers*
Mr. Robert Goldbeck
7. Chorus — { *a* "The Dreamy Lake" . . . . . *Schumann*
b "The Spring of Our Rejoicing" . . . . . *Durner*
8. Solo — "The Erl King" . . . . . *Schubert*
Miss Jessica Haskell
9. Chorus — "Champagne Song" . . . . . *Schroeter*
10. Solo — "Salute a Bergamo" . . . . . *Siebert*
Mr. Frank A. Bowen
11. Chorus — "The Miller's Daughter" . . . . . *Haertel*

The Club gave four concerts during its first season, the soloists being Miss Haskell, Mrs. Fox, Miss Fanny Root, Miss Ella A. White, and the pianists, Robert Goldbeck, Anna Mehlig, N. Ledochowski, and Emil Liebling. Upon this occasion Anna Mehlig was one of the audience, and was so delighted with the singing that at the request of Mr. Dohn and myself she came to the stage and played two Chopin numbers. The Club's work made a great sensation. It was the most perfect Männerchor singing a Chicago audience had ever heard. Its success was evidently assured.

The Club began its second season at the new Kingsbury Hall, September 30, 1873, and was assisted by Mrs. L. A. Huck in solos, by Mrs. Farwell, Mrs. Huck, Mrs. Johnson, and Messrs. Bischoff, Foltz, and Bowen in a sextet from Mozart's "Cosi fan tutti," and Messrs. Goldbeck, Lewis, and Eicheim in the Beethoven Trio, op. 19. It gave an extra concert with the Thomas Orchestra, October 15, and on November 13 inaugurated McCormick Hall, Wieniawski, the violinist, and the Kunkel Brothers, pianists, being the soloists.

McCormick Hall became the Club's home for a time, and there it produced, with the Thomas Orchestra, Schubert's "Allmacht," Schumann's "Gipsy Life," and "Paradise and the Peri." At the last concert in the hall, Mills, the pianist, was the soloist.

The Club up to this time had sung as a *Männerchor* but in the Autumn of 1874 there was a general desire expressed among the members for a change to mixed chorus. On the twenty-first of December the president, vice president, and conductor resigned. The *Männerchor* repertory was wellnigh exhausted, and Mr. Dohn did not care to lead a large mixed chorus. The president and vice president had doubts as to the success of such a change, which happily were not verified. Theodore F. Brown was elected vice president, and Carl Bergstein conductor. Bergstein conducted at three concerts, but proved unsatisfactory, and a change was made. In 1875 the officers elected were G. W. Chamberlain, vice president; E. G. Newell, secretary; William Cox, treasurer; E. D. Messinger, librarian; and William L. Tomlins, conductor. Mr. Tomlins first directed the Club, at the concert of November 17, 1875. Under his regime the Club was changed to a mixed chorus, the active membership was greatly enlarged, and the chorus was admirably trained, especially in attack and quality of tone. I have always thought that Mr. Tomlins's best results were obtained in the Club's festival of 1877, when, with the assistance of Mrs. H. M. Smith, the Boston soprano, Annie Louise Cary, alto, J. W. Winch, tenor, Myron W. Whitney, basso, the Thomas Orchestra, and a large chorus of children, the Club gave the first



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part of Mendelssohn's "St. Paul," Gounod's cantata, "By Babylon's Wave," Sullivan's cantata, "On Shore and Sea," and Handel's "Israel in Egypt," besides minor compositions. At this festival Mr. Tomlins displayed the result of his indomitable industry and his experience in choral work at the best. He also inaugurated the practice of giving "The Messiah" at Christmas time. In his earlier interpretation of "The Messiah" he produced excellent results, but after a time made changes which did not work to advantage. Since Mr. Tomlins's retirement from the Club he has devoted himself mainly to the training of children's voices, and to the development of certain peculiar theories in regard to music. The Club has continued to prosper under Mr. Wild's direction during the last ten or twelve years, and now ranks as one of the most important choral organizations in the country.

A year after the organization of the Apollo Club the Beethoven Society literally sprang into existence. It was born October 28, 1873. Carl Wolfsohn, a prominent Philadelphia musician, was here on a visit in October, and friends who were acquainted with his abilities as pianist, teacher, and conductor, assured him they would organize a society if he would remain here and take the conductorship. He accepted the offer, and the society was promptly organized and named for his favorite composer, a bust of whom he subsequently gave to Lincoln Park. Its officers at the outset were: Henry Greenebaum, president; John G. Shortall, vice president;

Agnes Ingersoll, secretary; and J. M. Hubbard, treasurer. The first concert was given January 15, 1874. It was a memorable concert in one particular, for, unlike the Apollo Club, the Beethoven Society began its career as a mixed chorus. It was much the largest and by far the most important aggregation of male and female voices Chicago had yet heard. With this attraction, and aided by Mr. Wolfsohn's enthusiastic leadership, the Society enjoyed continuous success until Tomlins, with his mixed chorus, which was still better trained, made serious inroads upon its prosperity. There is no question that Mr. Wolfsohn was sincerely devoted to music, that he was uncommercial in every way connected with art, and that he labored honestly and indefatigably to make the Beethoven Society a power in music; but while he was a better musician than Tomlins, he was not so able a conductor. Still his society lasted eleven years, and in that time did some excellent work. One of its most memorable occasions was the concert given in December, 1874, upon the one hundred and fourth anniversary of Beethoven's birth. The Society sang the Beethoven Mass in C and "Hallelujah Chorus," and the "Choral Fantasie" was given in fine style, Mrs. Regina Watson at the piano. In addition to the regular concerts the Society gave reunions, and Mr. Wolfsohn also gave four series of piano recitals, in one of which he played the Beethoven Sonatas, and in the second and third the principal piano music of Schumann and Chopin. The fourth was historical in character. They were most remarkable undertakings, and represented the

highest standards of piano music as well as of artistic performance.

The societies organized since the Apollo Club and Beethoven Society do not come within the scope of these "Memories." They may be considered as current events.

CHAPTER XXI

SOME EVENTS AT HOME

THE WORLD'S FAIR MUSIC — ITS INCEPTION AND FAILURE — WHAT WAS DONE AND NOT DONE — THE FORCES ENGAGED — MUSIC OF THE CIVIL WAR PERIOD — DR. GEORGE F. ROOT — HIS EARLY CAREER — "THE BATTLE CRY OF FREEDOM" — HOW IT CAME TO BE WRITTEN — ROOT AS A COMPOSER — THE AUDITORIUM — HOME OF GRAND OPERA — ITS DEDICATION — WORKS PERFORMED IN IT — MILWARD ADAMS'S MANAGEMENT — THE STUDEBAKER THEATRE — HOME OF OPERA IN ENGLISH — WORKS PERFORMED IN IT — CHARLES C. CURTISS'S MANAGEMENT

BEFORE closing these memories I wish to say a little about the music of the Columbian Exposition, the patriotic music of the Civil War period, and also to show what the managers of the Auditorium and Studebaker Theatre have done for the advancement of music in Chicago. The last two topics concern establishments still in existence and flourishing under their original managers, but they serve to close the events of the half century.

The story of the World's Fair music is a tragic one. Never was a musical scheme more nobly planned, and never did one promise to be richer in results. It was devised by the ablest, most sincere, and most conscientious of American directors, endowed with nearly fifty years of experience, the pioneer of instrumental music in this country, and the acknowledged leader in national musical progress. He was given, as he

supposed, absolute authority. His scheme, if it had been carried out, would have exhibited the world's musical progress from the classical period to the present. He prepared an exhaustive repertory of vocal and instrumental music and collected a brilliant array of artists and composers for the performances. I have already shown in the personal sketch of Mr. Thomas how his plans were frustrated by the incompetency of some of his assistants, the ignorance of some of his official superiors, and the jealousy and greed of commercialism. His administration should have ended October 11, with brilliant success, and it would have done so had he been left free to carry out his plans. But he was too proud to be dominated by ignorance, too honest to yield to commercialism, too honorable to insult a great artist. It closed August 11, when he laid down his baton and retired, grieved and disappointed. How bitter was his disappointment those closest to him only knew. With his resignation the splendid scheme collapsed like a bubble. From August 11 to October 11 an acephalous musical crowd controlled the World's Fair music, and mediocrity reigned supreme. Mr. Thomas's enemies had triumphed, but, like Samson, they pulled down the temple of music, and the World's Fair musical scheme was buried in the ruins.

The Bureau of Music was composed of Theodore Thomas, director; William F. Tomlins, choral director; and George H. Wilson, secretary. The dedicatory exercises took place October 22, 1892. The interpreting force included 5570 singers, 190 orchestra players, fifty bands of fifty each, and fifty drummers. The musical

selections were the "Columbus Hymn and March," for orchestra, military bands, and chorus, written for the occasion by Professor Paine of Harvard University; the music to Miss Harriet Monroe's ode, written by George W. Chadwick; Mendelssohn's cantata "To the Sons of Art"; Beethoven's Chorus "In Praise of God"; and the patriotic numbers "Star-Spangled Banner" and "Hail Columbia." As the music halls were not ready at the opening, May 1, 1893, the programme simply included Paine's "March and Hymn" without chorus, and the overture to "Rienzi." Upon the same day the Board of Lady Managers celebrated the opening of the Woman's Building with a programme including a "Jubilate" for mixed voices and orchestra, by Mrs. H. H. A. Beach of Boston; a grand march for orchestra by Frau Ingeborg von Bronsart of Weimar; the "Dramatic Overture" by Miss Frances Ellicott of London; and the so-called national tune "America." The inaugural concert was given on the next day with the following dignified programme:

1. Overture, "Consecration of the House" . . . . . Beethoven
2. Concerto in A minor, op. 17 . . . . . Paderewski
   IGNACE JAN PADEREWSKI
3. The Unfinished Symphony . . . . . Schubert
4. Nocturne, prelude, mazurka, and berceuse . . . . . Chopin
   IGNACE JAN PADEREWSKI
5. Prelude to "The Meistersingers" . . . . . Wagner

Thus was Mr. Thomas's scheme introduced. The instrumental forces which he utilized during his administration were the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Franz Kneisel, leader; New York Symphony Orchestra, Walter Damrosch, leader; the Kneisel Quartette; and his own

band. The following is a complete list of the vocal societies which took part:

St. Paul Choral Association and Minneapolis Choral Association, S. A. Baldwin, leader; Cincinnati Festival Association, Theodore Thomas, leader; Apollo Club of Chicago, W. F. Tomlins, leader; Milwaukee Arion Club, Arthur Weld, leader; St. Louis Choral Association, Joseph Otten, leader; Brooklyn Arion Society, Arthur Claasen, leader; Lineff Russian Choir, J. V. Hlavac, leader; German-American Women's Chorus, Gabriel Katzenberger, leader; German Liederkranz, New York, Heinrich Zoellner, leader; Cleveland vocal society, Alfred Arthur, leader; Columbus Arion Club, W. H. Lott, leader; Dayton Philharmonic Society, W. L. Blumenschein, leader; Louisville Musical Club, L. A. Torrens, leader; Pittsburg Mozart Club, J. P. McCullum, leader; Omaha Apollo Club, L. A. Torrens, leader; Junger Männerchor, Carl Samans, leader; American Union of Swedish Singers, John R. Ostergren, leader; United Scandinavian Singers of America, J. W. Colberg, leader; Scottish Choral Union (led by Mr. Thomas); Stoughton, Mass., Musical Society (organized in 1786), L. Soule, leader; Topeka Chorus, George Wilder, leader; Emporia, Kans., Chorus, William Rees, leader; Abilene-Salina, Kans., Chorus, M. H. Hewitt, leader; Newton, Kans., Chorus, Mrs. Gaston Boyd, leader; Leavenworth, Kans., Chorus, Mrs. S. W. Jones, leader; Hutchinson, Kans., chorus, B. S. Hoagland, leader; Lyon, Kans., Chorus, W. C. Little, leader; Sterling, Kans., Chorus, Mr. Van Diemen, leader; and Chicago Columbian Chorus, W. L. Tomlins, leader.

The instrumental soloists were as follows:

Pianists. — Ignace Jan Paderewski, W. H. Sherwood, Fanny B. Zeisler, Emil Liebling, Carl Stasny, Rata Oakleston-Lippe, Anna Wallin, Ada McGregor, Rubinstein Demarest, H. M. Field, Neallie Stevens, and Neallie Reder-Crane.

Violinists. — C. M. Loeffler, Max Bendix, Adolph Brodsky, Richard Arnold, Maud Powell, George MacDonald, J. Abbie Clarke, Theodore Spiering.

'Cellists. — Alwin Schroeder, Bruno Steindl.

Harpists. — Edward Schuecker, Esmerald Cervantes, M. Aptommas.

Clarinetist. — J. Schreurs.

Flutist. — Vigo Andersen.

The following is a list of the vocal soloists:

Sopranos. — Amalie Materna, Minnie Fish Griffin, Felice Kaschoska, Lilian Blauvelt, Agnes Thompson, Electa Gifford, Emma Juch, Corinne Moore-Lawson, Genevra Johnstone-Bishop, Lilian Rive, Jennie Dutton, Helen Buckley, Lilian Nordica, Priscilla White, Medora Hensen, Madame Suelke, Caroline Östberg, Sigrid Wolf, Signe Hille, Augusta Ohrstrom-Renard, Carrie Benzinger, Mabel Munro, Marie W. Fobert, Ernestine Colton, S. C. Ford, Kate Rulla, Louise Nikita, Emma Heckla.

Contraltos. — Katharine Fisk, Lena Little, Christine Nielsen-Dreyer, Mary Louise Clary. Belle I. Wright, Bella Tomlins.

Tenors. — Edward Lloyd, Whitney Mockridge, Wilhelm Herold, Frank A. Dunham, Ben Davies, Charles A. Knorr.

Barytones. — George E. Holmes, Louis Ehrgott, Egon Eisenbaum, C. F. Lindquist.

Bassos. — Ericksen F. Bushnell, A. F. Maish, Emil Fischer, Gardner Lamson, Plunket Greene, Conrad Behrens, Orme d'Arval, W. A. Goodrich, Thomas A. Morris.

The symphonies performed were Beethoven's third, fifth, and seventh; Schubert's Unfinished and ninth; Schumann's third and fourth; Mozart's G minor and "Jupiter"; Brahms's fourth; Tschaikowsky's fourth and fifth; Raff's third, and Chadwick's second. The large vocal works were the "Elijah," "Creation," "Messiah," "St. Matthew's Passion," "St. Paul," "Utrecht

Jubilate," "Judas Maccabæus," Berlioz's "Requiem," Brahms's "German Requiem," Rossini's "Stabat Mater," and the "Hymn of Praise."

During the one hundred and three days of the Thomas administration, one hundred and thirty-five concerts of a high class were given under his supervision, which may be grouped as follows: Popular orchestral concerts, 53; Music Hall series, 34; Recital Hall series, 4; in the Woman's Building, 3; American artist series, 2. As already said, Mr. Thomas retired August 11. Then followed a hodge-podge of shreds and patches. Max Bendix was given charge of the orchestra, and Mr. Tomlins remained as director of the vocal forces. Bendix gave twenty-nine popular concerts and six with a string quartet, organized as follows: First violin, Bendix; second violin, Knoll; viola, Junker; 'cello, Unger. There were eight so-called song-recitals by a group of Thompsons. I think they hailed from Kansas, but their locale matters little. The Apollo Club sang two or three times, and Tomlins mustered his children several times and put them through their paces. There were sixty-two organ concerts by twenty organists, the best known of whom were Guilmant, Eddy, Whiting, Carl, Lang, Wild, Middelschulte, Thunder, and Coerne. But where one person listened to the organ peals, ten thousand hung around the band stands and cheered Inness and Sousa. At last the Lineff Russian choir, which had been off barn-storming, returned and gave one funereal concert, October 11, to a handful of people, which put an end to the musical muddle — a finale not worth a doxology.

Thus closes the mournful story of the World's Fair music tragedy. It is little wonder that at a later date, when the managers of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition at St. Louis invited Mr. Thomas to take the musical directorship he promptly but respectfully declined and advised them to confine their music to the band stands in the open air.

The mere mention of the patriotic songs produced during the Civil War period recalls memories of Dr. George F. Root. He was a courteous, refined gentleman of the old school, always wearing a genial smile, and the cheeriest of optimists. Witness the closing sentence in his autobiography: "My wife and I would be glad to be permitted to see our golden wedding-day, which will be in 1895, and still more, to look over into the twentieth century, which will be five years later; but if that cannot be, we will be thankful for the pleasant life we have lived here, and hope for a pleasanter and still more useful life hereafter."

As a composer, Mr. Root was of the school of Lowell Mason, Webb, Hastings, Bradbury, and those other pioneers whose names are closely connected with the old-fashioned singing schools, musical conventions, and normal institutes, — departments of the craft which have gradually given place to more modern methods. He was of Massachusetts birth and proud of it, as is every son of the Old Bay State. His early days were passed in North Reading, a charming old-fashioned village in Essex County noted in the old days as the scene of the witchcraft superstition, and in these days

GEORGE F. ROOT

as the only section of Massachusetts where real New Englanders or Yankees may be found. He began his musical career in 1838 as a choir singer and organist, and a year later organized a singing school and became identified with institutes for the instruction of teachers and choir leaders. All this in Boston and its vicinity. In 1844 he went to New York and entered upon the same duties on a more extensive scale. In those days he belonged to a vocal quartette, which made such a successful appearance in a New York Philharmonic concert that Theodore Eisfeld, one of the pioneers of chamber music before Theodore Thomas and William Mason were in the field, wrote a quartet for them. In 1850 he went to Europe, heard everything worth hearing, and made some valuable acquaintances in England who were of great service to him in after years. Back at his work in 1851, he began composing. Stephen C. Foster's songs were all the rage at that time, and their success tempted him to enter the same field, which was not so overcrowded as it is now. "Hazel Dell" (1852) was his first essay in this line, and this was followed by "Rosalie, the Prairie Flower." About this time he also produced a sacred song, "Shining Shore," which is still a favorite. "Hazel Dell" and "Rosalie" are now almost forgotten, except by old timers who lived in that period when it was not a crime to be sentimental. In those days Braham and Henry Russell were here singing sentimental ditties, and I, for one, would be glad to hear them now if only Braham and Russell were here to sing them.

It was in 1858 that Towner, Dr. Root's brother, and

C. M. Cady, who for a time was leader of the Musical Union, started a music store in Chicago. Dr. Root was a partner in the concern, and this brought him to Chicago about the year 1861, and from those days until the time of his death he was a citizen here, well known and esteemed by all. The outbreak of the Civil War induced him to produce patriotic songs, which appeared at intervals, inspired by contemporaneous events in the great struggle. His first song was, "The first Gun is fired," but it did not make much of a hit. When President Lincoln issued his second call for troops, "The Battle Cry of Freedom" occurred to him as a motive for a song, while he was reading the document. He dashed it off hurriedly the next morning at the store. There was to be a public meeting on the same day in the Court House Square. Frank and Jules Lumbard, who were the singers laureate of the war period, came to the store to get something new to sing. The Doctor gave them "The Battle Cry." They ran it over once or twice, went to the meeting, and shouted it in their trumpet tones, and before the last verse was finished thousands joined in the refrain. It spread from that Square all over the country. It was heard in camps, on the march, upon the battle-field. It became the Northern Marseillaise. I heard it sung once under peculiar circumstances, when I was with the Mississippi River flotilla, acting as correspondent for "The Chicago Tribune." There was a transport in convoy of the fleet, with troops on board. One evening, as I sat upon the deck of the gunboat wondering what would happen next day, for the Confederates were in our immediate

vicinity behind strong batteries, I heard a clear tenor voice on the transport singing "The Battle Cry of Freedom." As the singer's notes died away on the evening air, the response of "Dixie" came across the water from an equally clear tenor. As soon as he had ceased the first singer kept up the concert by a vigorous shout of the song which declares the intention of "hanging Jeff Davis on a sour apple tree, as we go marching on." And then all was silent for the night. There was no song of the war time that equalled "The Battle Cry" in popularity and patriotic inspiration. I think it was more effective than Work's "Marching through Georgia," for that was reminiscent of the past, while "The Battle Cry" was an appeal in a crisis. Dr. Root wrote several other war songs, among which "Tramp, tramp, tramp, the Boys are marching" was the best known. He also persuaded Henry Clay Work to utilize his song-writing ability in the national cause. The success of P. P. Bliss, the "sweet-singing" evangelist, was also largely due to his encouragement.

Dr. Root was not a composer of great music. He did not write what is known as the higher music. He has left nothing for the orchestra. He wrote popular music of the better class, and music which always served a useful purpose. His compositions may be divided into four groups: 1. Sentimental songs for the fireside and concert room, like "Hazel Dell," "Rosalie," "The Vacant Chair," and "There is Music in the Air." 2. War songs, like "The Battle Cry," "Tramp, tramp," and "Just before the Battle." 3. Sacred songs, like

"I will lay me down in Peace," "The Shining Shore," and hundreds of others for the Church and Sabbath School, which are even better known in England than in this country. 4. Cantatas for mixed voices, and Psalm-books for choirs.

The war songs have disappeared with the occasion which inspired them. He never attempted to write a national anthem. And this brings up the old question, Why is it that we have not a national anthem of our own? It should be humiliating to the national pride that our "Star-Spangled Banner" is sung to the tune of an English tavern drinking song; that "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean," is borrowed from "Britannia, the Pride of the Ocean"; that the melody of "Hail Columbia" is of uncertain origin; that the tune of "America" came to us after it had done years of service in France and England; and that "Yankee Doodle" may have been an English country dance, or a Dutch children's song, or a Magyar melody, or a Biscayan air, or an outgrowth from the vocal motive in Beethoven's Choral Symphony, — anything, indeed, except an American melody. The English have their "Rule Britannia" and "God save the Queen"; the French, their "Marseillaise" and "Partant pour la Syrie"; the Germans, their "Heil dir im Siegenkranz" and "Wacht am Rhein"; the Austrians, their "Emperor's Hymn"; the Dutch, their "Wilhelmus van Nassouwe"; the Russians, their impressive chorale, "God preserve Thy People"; the Swiss, their "Ranz des Vaches"; the Danes, their "King Christian stod," — all of home production. All of ours are borrowed. It is said that

national anthems are inspired when the moment comes. The moment is a long time coming.

The thought of the massive Auditorium, with its great strong tower "standing four square" to all the winds of heaven, was first conceived by Ferdinand W. Peck, and his indomitable energy and enlightened liberality, aided by a cohesion of public-spirited men, forwarded its construction and crowned the scheme with success. It was dedicated to art, December 9, 1889, amid scenes of exceptional brilliancy. The President and Vice-President of the United States, Benjamin Harrison and Levi P. Morton, who had been nominated within its walls before it was finished, left their official duties in Washington to honor the occasion with their presence, thus making it a national event. The governors of several States, prominent Canadian officials, the State, county, and city officials, and distinguished men and women from all parts of the country, were in attendance. France had the honor of furnishing the first music performed at the dedication; M. Theodore Dubois, professor of composition in the Paris Conservatory and successor to M. Saint-Saëns as organist at the Madeleine, contributed a "Triumphal Fantasie" for organ and orchestra; and M. de la Tombell, at one time a pupil of Dubois, a "Concert Fantasie" for organ solo. The other numbers were Mr. F. G. Gleason's scholarly setting in the form of a symphonic cantata for tenor solo, chorus and orchestra of Miss Harriet Monroe's Festival Ode, written for the occasion, Mr. Walter T. Root taking the solo and the Apollo Club the choral

work; the choruses, "See the Conquering Hero comes," "The Heavens are telling," from the "Creation," the "Hallelujah Chorus" from the "Messiah," and "America." Adelina Patti completed the programme by singing "Home, Sweet Home," and the familiar Swiss Echo Song for an encore.

The dedication was followed by a four weeks' season of Italian opera presented by the Abbey, Grau, and Schoeffel opera troupe, which proved to be one of the most successful, musically and financially, ever given in this country. There was a spirited competition for choice of boxes, and generous premiums were paid, due in part to civic pride, in part to the cajoling eloquence of Franklin Head, the auctioneer. George M. Pullman got first choice for $1600; R. T. Crane, second, $1000; Marshall Field, third, $1000; Samuel Allerton, fourth, $1000; C. M. Cummings, fifth, $900; R. C. Nickerson, sixth, $800; S. M. Nickerson, seventh, $800; Otto Young, eighth, $700; Marshall Field, ninth, $700; George S. Walker, tenth, $800; C. W. Fuller, eleventh, $900; W. L. Peck, twelfth, $800. The remaining boxes were disposed of at premiums ranging from $700 to $125, and nearly all the chairs in the parquet were taken at a fifty-dollar premium. It was a testimonial to the municipal patriotism of the four highest bidders that not one of them was particularly interested in music.

The season opened December 10, with a performance of Gounod's "Romeo and Juliet," cast as follows: Juliet, Mme. Patti; Stefano, Mme. Fabbri; Gertrude, Mlle. Bauermeister; Tybalt, Sig. Perugini; Benvolio, Sig.

Bieletto; Mercutio, Sig. Del Puente; Paris, Sig. Lucini; Gregorio, Sig. Cernusco; Capulet, Sig. de Vaschetti; Friar Laurence, Sig. Marcassa; Romeo, Sig. Ravelli; Conductor, Sig. Sapio. The crowning event of the season, however, was not "Romeo and Juliet" with Patti and Ravelli, but Verdi's "Otello" with Albani and Tamagno. It was performed January 2, 1890, and its cast should be preserved: Desdemona, Mme. Albani; Emilia, Mme. Synneberg; Iago, Sig. Del Puente; Cassio, Sig. Perugino; Roderigo, Sig. Bieletto; Lodovico, Sig. Castelmary; Montano, Sig. de Vaschetti; Otello, Sig. Tamagno; Conductor, Sig. Arditi.

The following table gives the number and duration of operatic seasons from the dedication of the Auditorium to the present time:

Dec. 10, 1889	Abbey, Schoeffel, and Grau troupe . . .	four weeks
March 10, 1890	Abbey, Schoeffel, and Grau troupe . . .	one week
April 21, 1890	Metropolitan German troupe	three weeks
Nov. 9, 1891	Abbey, Schoeffel, and Grau troupe . . .	five weeks
March 12, 1894	Abbey, Schoeffel, and Grau troupe . . .	four weeks
Jan. 11, 1895	Abbey, Schoeffel, and Grau troupe . . .	three weeks
April 15, 1895	Damrosch troupe	one week
Nov. 18, 1895	Damrosch troupe	two weeks
Jan. 23, 1896	Abbey, Schoeffel, and Grau troupe . . .	two weeks
Feb. 22, 1897	Abbey, Schoeffel, and Grau troupe . . .	four weeks
March 14, 1898	Damrosch and Ellis Combination	two weeks
Nov. 7, 1898	Maurice Grau troupe	three weeks
Feb. 13, 1899	Ellis Opera troupe	two weeks
March 20, 1899	New Orleans French opera troupe	one week
Nov. 13, 1899	Maurice Grau troupe	three weeks
March 12, 1900	New Orleans French opera troupe	three weeks
Dec. 24, 1900	Savage Metropolitan English troupe . . .	two weeks
April 22, 1901	Maurice Grau troupe	one week
March 31, 1902	Maurice Grau troupe	two weeks
Dec. 20–21	Mascagni's troupe	two performances
April 7, 1903	Maurice Grau troupe	two weeks
March 14, 1904	Conried troupe	two weeks
March 20, 1905	Conried troupe	one week
April 2, 1906	Conried troupe	one week
Feb. 18, 1907	San Carlo troupe	one week

April 8, 1907	Conried troupe	one week
Jan. 20, 1908	San Carlo troupe	three weeks
April 20, 1908	Conried troupe	one week

It will be seen from this table that opera seasons during the last eight years have not only been less frequent, but that they have steadily diminished in length. During these nineteen years there have been 278 performances of opera in the Auditorium. Seventy-nine different operas have been presented, eighteen of them for the first time in this city. The following list of these operas may prove valuable for reference. The star indicates operas given for the first time here:

Opera	First Time	No. of Performances
Romeo and Juliet	Dec. 10, 1889	13
William Tell	Dec. 11, 1889	5
Faust	Dec. 12, 1889	38
Il Trovatore	Dec. 13, 1889	17
Lucia di Lammermoor	Dec. 14, 1889	15
Aida	Dec. 16, 1889	20
Semiramide	Dec. 17, 1889	4
Martha	Dec. 21, 1889	9
Huguenots	Dec. 23, 1889	22
Traviata	Dec. 24, 1889	6
Sonnambula	Dec. 27, 1889	3
*Othello	Jan. 2, 1890	8
Barber of Seville	Jan. 4, 1890	10
Pinafore	Feb. 10, 1890	32
Mikado	Feb. 20, 1890	16
Pirates of Penzance	March 5, 1890	5
L'Africaine	March 10, 1890	5
Linda	March 11, 1890	1
*Lakme	March 13, 1890	1
*Salammbo	March 14, 1890	3
Tannhäuser	April 21, 1890	19
Meistersinger	April 23, 1890	6
La Juive	April 24, 1890	6
Lohengrin	April 25, 1890	27
Masked Ball	April 28, 1890	2
Flying Dutchman	April 29, 1890	1
Fidelio	April 30, 1890	2
*Queen of Sheba	May 1, 1890	6
Norma	May 2, 1890	2
*Barber of Bagdad	May 5, 1890	3
*La Poupée	May 5, 1890	6

Don Giovanni	May 6, 1890	9
Walküere	May 9, 1890	13
Iolanthe	Sept. 15, 1890	4
Trial by Jury	Sept. 18, 1890	16
Patience	Sept. 25, 1890	4
Carmen	May 4, 1891	37
Bohemian Girl	May 6, 1891	16
*Orpheus	Nov. 11, 1891	1
Dinorah	Nov. 18, 1891	1
Rigoletto	Nov. 25, 1891	9
Mignon	Nov. 30, 1891	7
Cavalleria Rusticana	Dec. 4, 1891	27
Philemon and Baucis	Dec. 26, 1892	6
The Basoche	Jan. 2, 1893	3
Marriage of Figaro	March 14, 1894	6
Hamlet (fourth act)	March 27, 1894	1
I Pagliacci	March 28, 1894	13
*Werther	March 29, 1894	1
*Falstaff	March 14, 1895	2
Tristan and Isolde	April 17, 1895	8
Siegfried	April 18, 1895	10
Der Freischütz	Nov 26, 1895	1
Götterdämmerung	Nov. 27, 1895	4
*La Navarraise	March 31, 1896	3
*Mefistofele	March 3, 1897	1
*Le Cid	March 8, 1897	2
La Bohème	Feb. 13, 1899	3
La Favorita	March 24, 1899	1
*Sigurd	March 26, 1900	1
*Manon	March 27, 1900	2
*Esmeralda	Dec. 31, 1900	1
La Tosca	April 24, 1901	4
Magic Flute	April 3, 1902	4
*Manru	April 5, 1902	1
Rheingold	April 7, 1902	1
Daughter of the Regiment	April 7, 1903	1
Don Pasquale	April 16, 1903	3
The Prophet	April 17, 1903	1
The Elixir of Love	March 23, 1904	1
The Gondoliers	Jan. 25, 1905	1
Parsifal	March 21, 1905	2
La Gioconda	March 24, 1905	3
Fledermaus	March 27, 1905	1
*Hansel and Gretel	April 4, 1906	2
Madame Butterfly	April 10, 1907	1
Robin Hood	March 23, 1908	20
Serenade	April 12, 1908	10
*Iris	April 25, 1908	1

An analysis of these statistics has a direct bearing upon a vexed question. There has been much complaint

of late because managers repeat old operas, especially "Faust," "Carmen," "Cavalleria Rusticana," "Huguenots," "Aïda," and "Trovatore," and neglect new works. The above table seems to furnish adequate explanation of their policy. It will be conceded that managers are not presenting operas from sentimental or educational motives. Their object is purely commercial. They find out what the public wants and will pay for. They would just as cheerfully produce new operas as old ones if the public desired them. They cost but little more. The salary list remains the same. The principals furnish their own costumes. Any old costumes will do for the chorus people and supernumeraries. The difference in the cost of producing new and old operas would not be considered if the public were clamoring for the former. Now, what does the table show? The operas most frequently performed have been the six against which certain people have so stoutly protested. They have been the "best sellers," the money-makers. Of the eighteen new ones given in the Auditorium ten failed to pay expenses, and the other seven hardly warranted more than one or two presentations. Apparently, then, it is the fault of the public, and not of the manager, that old operas are given so frequently. This is not encouraging from the art point of view, but so long as opera is dominated by fashion and society there is little hope of change. Beethoven is the greatest master of all times, and yet his "Fidelio" has been given but twice in nineteen years at the Auditorium. Massenet and Saint-Saëns are the greatest of contemporary French composers, and their operas were not

wanted a second time. Paderewski is the most eminent of living pianists. His opera, "Manru," was given once to a handful of people. But "Faust" and "Huguenots" and "Carmen" go on like the brook, and apparently, like the brook, may go on forever.

The Auditorium was also the home of the Theodore Thomas orchestra from its first concert in 1893 until it dedicated its own hall, December 14, 1904, with the assistance of the Apollo Club and Mendelssohn Club, and many there are who still look longingly back to the old home place. It was also the home of the Apollo Club from the time of its opening until the season of 1907–1908. The Apollo Club has been a hall-opener on many occasions. It christened Standard Hall in 1872, Kingsbury Hall in 1873, McCormick Hall in the same year, and assisted in the opening of the Auditorium in 1889, and Orchestra Hall in 1904. The Auditorium has also been used for the brilliant charity balls, great political meetings and conventions, concerts, spectacles, social entertainments, church services, and the drama.

Mr. Milward Adams has been its manager from the beginning, and to his able administration of its affairs is due its success. He came to the Auditorium amply equipped for his work. His active participation in the musical events of Chicago began in 1871, immediately after the great fire, in association with Mr. George B. Carpenter. Not long after Mr. Carpenter's death he took charge of the Central Music Hall, and also managed the never-to-be forgotten Summer Garden concerts given by Mr. Thomas in the old Exposition Building on the Lake Front. He was also Mr. Thomas's business agent for

twelve years on the road. He managed the brilliant Mapleson operatic festival, and the two great festivals of 1882 and 1884. In 1889 he undertook the management of the Auditorium, and is still at his desk, nearing the twentieth year of his service. He has been connected with all the great musical enterprises of Chicago for thirty-seven years; and, as I have been on terms of intimacy with him during that period, I know whereof I speak when I claim for him a leading position in the advancement of music and art in Chicago. An honest, intelligent, fearless, energetic, and resolute manager is an indispensable factor in the problem of the success of any scheme, and such Mr. Adams has always proved himself. Without such a promoter behind it, to counsel and control, the highest artistic endeavor may fail. Whatever Mr. Adams has undertaken has succeeded, and, as nearly all that he has undertaken has assisted in Chicago's artistic advancement, Chicago owes him a debt of gratitude.

The Studebaker Theatre is the home of English opera in Chicago, though the so-called grand operas have frequently been presented upon its stage. It is but one feature of the Fine Arts Building, and the Fine Arts Building is the accomplishment of Mr. Charles C. Curtiss. It is a hive of busy workers in music, painting, sculpture, literature, and the arts and crafts. Its various cells house the theatre, the music hall, the assembly hall, the Amateur Musical Club, the Fortnightly Club, the Caxton Club, "The Dial," the only high-class literary periodical in the country, and many other associations of

an artistic character, and the studios of a small army of busy workers in beautiful things. Mr. Curtiss's business experiences fitted him to undertake a project of this kind, and his executive ability, refined taste, and artistic instincts have made it a success. He is a native of Chicago, and his father was twice mayor of the city in its early days. His whole life has been identified with music. He began his business career as a clerk in the house of Lyon and Healy, and resigned that position to become manager of the Root and Sons Music Company. Subsequently he became identified with a prominent piano house, and during his administration as manager and president of the company, he built a music hall in connection with his business. It was this hall which suggested to him the idea of constructing a building which should attract the literary and artistic workers of the city, making for them an abiding home, and confining it strictly to the uses for which the building was intended. Thus from roof to basement it is filled with what is somewhat tritely called "the good, the true, and the beautiful," and no sordid or unclean things are allowed entrance. Though not a musician himself, Mr. Curtiss is one of the charter members of the Apollo Club, and was its first secretary. His whole life has been spent in the advancement of art in Chicago, and he has had the satisfaction of living to witness the rich fruition of his lofty ideals and to enjoy the rewards of his honorable struggle in the attachment of a host of friends and the success of his undertaking.

The Studebaker Theatre was dedicated September 29, 1895, as the Studebaker Hall, and was opened as a theatre in the first week of April, 1899, by the Castle Square Opera Company with a performance of "Faust." As in the case of the Auditorium, "Faust," "Trovatore," and "Carmen" head the list of grand operas in the number of performances, but for some curious reason the Studebaker's patrons do not care much for the tragic wooing of Valentine and Raoul, or the heroism of Marcel, as the "Huguenots" has had but a single hearing. Perhaps they have become too accustomed to the bright and cheery Studebaker repertory to be harrowed by the horrors of Saint Bartholomew's Eve. Since 1899, eighty-eight different works of a musical character have been performed in the theatre, besides a large number of dramas and many concerts. These eighty-eight works may be grouped as follows: Grand operas, 28; light operas, 40; musical comedies, 20; and all in English. The following is a list of the operas usually classed as grand, with the number of performances of each:

Faust, 11 times; Carmen, 11; Il Trovatore, 10; Martha, 9; Aïda, 7; Lohengrin, 6; Cavalleria Rusticana, 5; Romeo and Juliet, 4; Lucia, 4; Tannhäuser, 4: La Tosca, 4; Othello, 3; Mignon, 3: Fra Diavolo, 2; La Bohème, 2; I Pagliacci, 2; Rigoletto, Sonnambula, Der Freischütz, Traviata, Flying Dutchman, Gioconda, Don Giovanni, and Huguenots, 1 each.

The light operas which have been given are as follows:

Bohemian Girl, 8 times; Mikado, 6; Chimes of Normandy, 4; Erminie, 3; Tarantella, 3; Beggar Student, 3;

El Capitan, 3; Wedding Day, 2; Don Pasquale, 2; Pirates of Penzance, 2; Boccaccio, 2; Queen's Lace Handkerchief, 2; Pinafore, 2; Gipsy Baron, Trial by Jury, Daughter of the Regiment, The Gondoliers, Iolanthe, Maritana, Fledermaus, Lily of Killarney, Pygmalion and Galatea, Black Huzzar, Nanon, Mascot, Billee Taylor, Trip to Africa, Girofle Girofla, Little Tycoon, The Brigands, Merry Monarch, Lady Slavey, Rob Roy, Prince Bonnie, Olivette, Patience, Wizard of the Nile, and Falka, 1 each.

The vogue of the musical comedy is clearly indicated by the number of performances of these extravaganzas, which are "neither musical fish, flesh, nor good red herring." The list is as follows:

King Dodo, 232 times; Prince of Pilsen, 184; Peggy from Paris, 120; Sultan of Sulu, 101; Shogun, 96; Woodland, 74; Girl and Bandit, 72; Yankee Consul, 56; Mayor of Tokio, 56; Student King, 48; Flower Girl, 48; Cingalee, 40; The Other Girl, 40; The Hoyden, 40; Rose of the Alhambra, 32; Two Little Girls, 32; Miss Pocahontas, 32; Man from Now, 24; Yankee Tourist, 24; The Winning Girl, 16; Ten Girls, Isle of Champagne, Tar and Tartar, Petticoats and Bayonets, and Ping Pong, 1 each.

The Auditorium is the home of grand opera in Italian, French, and German. The Studebaker is the home of opera given in English. Other theatres have occasional performances of opera, but they are principally devoted to the drama. The brilliant manner in which operas have been produced in the Studebaker again suggests the possibility that the strong belief of Theodore Thomas and Anton Seidl in the practical success of operas given in English may yet be realized upon a larger and more comprehensive style than either of these great conductors imagined. It is

well known that Seidl was contemplating such a scheme, but it was interrupted by his untimely death. Theodore Thomas in his American opera season demonstrated that it was practical from the musical point of view. That his scheme failed, was due to business management for which he was in no way responsible. That it is feasible, Mr. Savage has also shown upon the Studebaker stage, and that American singers may cope with foreign singers in works of the highest class he has also demonstrated by his remarkable production of "Parsifal" on the stage of the Illinois Theatre.

CHAPTER XXII

POSTLUDE

I HAVE now perhaps sufficiently recorded in these "Memories" what the pioneers of music in Chicago, those who have borne "the burden and heat" in preparing the way for its development, have done for the art, as well as the important service which has been rendered by the great artists who have visited us. Among these pioneers I would assign a leading position to Julius Dyhrenfurth, George Davis, Frank and Jules G. Lumbard, John Hubbard, John G. Shortall, Edward S. Stickney, Edward I. Tinkham, John V. Le Moyne, Otto Matz, Henry Ahner, Canon Knowles, Charles C. Curtiss, Edward G. Newell, Charles W. Hamill, Philo A. Otis, Adolph W. Dohn, Theodore Thomas, Hans Balatka, Carl Wolfsohn, George F. Root, William Lewis, William L. Tomlins, Fritz Foltz, Frederick Grant Gleason, Heman F. Allen, Silas G. Pratt, C. M. Cady, Carl E. R. Mueller, George B. Carpenter, H. Clarence Eddy, and Dudley Buck. It would be pleasant also to dwell upon the important services still being rendered to the cause of music in Chicago by such trained and active workers as Dr. Florence Ziegfeld, Louis Falk, John J. Hattstaedt, William S. B. Matthews, Emil Liebling, Frederick W. Root, Henry S. Perkins, Adolph Rosenbecker,

William H. Sherwood, Harrison Wild, Bernhard Ziehn, William Castle, Frank T. Baird, Arthur Dunham, Clarence Dickinson, Wilhelm Middelschulte, Clayton F. Summy, Frederick J. Wessells, and Frederick Stock. These, however, still have their shoulders to the wheel. Some of them are growing gray in the service, but they are still actively at work. They belong to the present, with which memory has no concern.

With those who have passed away and with those who have retired I have been somewhat closely associated, and it has been pleasant to live over the days when "Music, heavenly maid, was young." It is none the less pleasant, however, to be "a looker-on in Venice" and watch the work of the toilers to-day, than it is to recall the work of the toilers of yesterday. As I sit by contented with this congenial task, I reflect that fifty years from now some chronicler may tell the story of another half-century, and thus preserve the century's history of music in Chicago and perhaps record results more marvellous than any one can now conceive.

In these "Memories" my readers have been made acquainted with all the great artists who have visited Chicago and some who have not, with their triumphs and failures, their habits, peculiarities, jealousies, and quarrels, for artists are human, sometimes very human. They have also been told the story of music in Chicago from its humble beginnings, more than seventy years ago, wellnigh to the present time. If I have written enthusiastically about the past, it is because I belong to it and have been closely associated with its musical

accomplishments. It has been a labor of love for me to tell the story, though nearly "all, all are gone, the old familiar faces." I am not one of those, however, who believe the old times were the best times or that all the giants lived in those days. There have been brave soldiers since Agamemnon as well as before. But I do firmly believe that the labor of these pioneers has made it easier for those who have followed them. They broke the ground and planted the seed. The work was rough and hard, and sometimes discouraging, and some did not live to reap any reward for their sowing, but passed away disappointed. Others have lived to see Chicago become a great musical centre. To the rising generation most of the artists mentioned in these "Memories" may not be more than the shadow of a name, but they have played an important part in the city's musical history. To those of the older generation their names will recall old associations, youthful enthusiasms, and delightful recollections. But the past is past and the future is yet to be seen. The days which we reach, crowned with fruition, are no more pleasing than those with bright prospects in view. I make no doubt there will be other Pattis and Parepas, Marios and Brignolis, Richters and Thomases, that great operas and oratorios will be written, and that great symphonies will be produced worthy to rank with the immortal ones of Beethoven and Mozart, for the ways of the gods are full of providence, and that the musical future of Chicago will be greater than its past or present, notwithstanding its increasing materialism and commercialism.

In recalling the events of this long period I feel that I have been fortunate to have been permitted so many years of enjoyment and am glad that I can appreciate what is now being done for the advancement of music. I hope also to live many years yet, to witness the great strides which music may make, for, like Andrew Carnegie, "I am not hankering for heaven." So I am thankful for the present with its accomplishments and the future with its promises, and yet as I lay down the pen and cast a longing look backward, once more the refrain of the old, old song haunts me:

"Ah! the days when we went gypsying,
A long time ago."

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